

The Cambridge Prehistory of the

BRONZE & IRON AGE MEDITERRANEAN

*Edited by A. BERNARD KNAPP
and PETER VAN DOMMELEN*



The Cambridge Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean

The Cambridge Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean offers new insights into the material and social practices of many different Mediterranean peoples during the Bronze and Iron Ages, presenting in particular those features that both connect and distinguish them. Contributors discuss in depth a range of topics that motivate and structure Mediterranean archaeology today, including insularity and connectivity; mobility, migration and colonisation; hybridisation and cultural encounters; materiality, memory and identity; community and household; life and death; and ritual and ideology. The volume's broad coverage of different approaches and contemporary archaeological practices will enable even general readers to understand better the people, ideas and materials that make up the world of Mediterranean archaeology today, beyond the borders that separate Europe, Africa and the Middle East. It will also help the practitioners of Mediterranean archaeology to move the subject forward in new and dynamic ways.

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CAMBRIDGE
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title:

www.cambridge.org/9780521766883

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First published 2014

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

The Cambridge prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean /

[edited by] A. Bernard Knapp, Peter van Dommelen.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-76688-3 (hardback)

1. Bronze age – Mediterranean Region. 2. Iron age – Mediterranean Region. 3. Prehistoric peoples – Mediterranean Region.

4. Mediterranean Region – Antiquities. 5. Material culture – Mediterranean Region – History – To 1500. 6. Social archaeology – Mediterranean Region. 7. Archaeology – Mediterranean Region. I. Knapp, Arthur Bernard.

II. Dommelen, Peter Alexander Ren van, 1966– III. Title: Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean.

GN778.25.C36 2015

937–dc23 2013047251

ISBN 978-0-521-76688-3 Hardback

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Front Cover: Bronze boat model from north central Sardinia (Italy) with a stag's head at the prow and quadrupeds and birds on the gunwales. It is one of two such bronzes reportedly found accidentally in the *Is Argiolas* or *Bonotta* area of Bultei, probably as part of an otherwise destroyed or looted hoard. The bronze model is stylistically dated to the Iron Age (ca. ninth to eighth century BC). While there is little evidence to support the suggestion that these boat models served as oil lamps, they are mostly found in ritual or communal contexts in both Sardinia and, to a lesser extent, the Italian mainland (A. Depalmas 2005: *Le navicelle di bronzo della Sardegna nuragica*, 31, 106. Cagliari: Ettore Gasperini).

Found in 1949, this boat model is held in the National Archaeological Museum in Cagliari (Sardinia, Italy), where it is also on display. The photo was kindly taken and made available by museum staff and is reproduced by permission of the Italian *Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici per le province di Cagliari e Oristano* and, by extension, the *Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici della Sardegna* and the Italian *Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali*. We thank the *soprintendente*, Dr. Marco Minoja, and his collaborators for their generous support.

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Preface

One of the many exciting developments in Mediterranean archaeology during the past two decades or so is the conceptual widening of the field. Not only have methodological and theoretical considerations gained prominence, but research beyond the Classical heartlands of Greece and Rome has also become more aware of, and connected with, the other islands, coasts and uplands of the Mediterranean.

With these developments in mind, we accepted a request from Beatrice Rehl, then sponsoring editor for archaeology at Cambridge University Press, to develop a proposal for a volume covering Bronze Age and Iron Age archaeology in the wider Mediterranean world. At the time (2007–2008), we were both staff members of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Glasgow. After extensive discussion, we elected not to produce an archaeological overview of regions and periods but rather to attempt to survey the intellectual landscapes of Mediterranean archaeology. After much discussion, we settled on and contacted a group of scholars (now our contributors), both established and upcoming, that we felt could cover most of the main theoretical and empirical parameters deemed essential to such a volume.

Because we wanted to foreground the Mediterranean as a whole and to emphasise the numerous interconnections within and beyond its seas, we ultimately submitted a proposal to Cambridge University Press (December 2008), the essence of which was our intention to produce a synthetic volume covering the multicultural, multivocal Mediterranean world of the Bronze and Iron Ages. Happily that proposal was accepted, and we set about notifying our contributors, with a tentative timetable and deadlines.

The papers began to come in already by late 2010, but with such an enormous groups of contributors and contributions (46 scholars and thirty-eight 10,000-word chapters), the final papers only arrived early in 2012, somewhat after our established deadline. Nonetheless, these papers represent the most up-to-date presentation possible for their respective topics and geographic areas, and we are extremely grateful to all our contributors not just for the superb studies they have produced but also for their perseverance and patience as we carried out our own editorial tasks over the past two years. We must give special thanks to Maria Carme Belarte, Massimo Osanna, Jaime Vives-Ferrándiz Sánchez and Yuval Yekutieli, whom we called upon at the last minute to produce papers to fill voids left by some of the original contributors who failed to meet our deadlines.

A critical feature of the book proposal and its gestation has been our determination to reach out beyond the Anglophone academic community and to involve scholars who would normally publish their work in languages other than English. This is particularly pertinent for the western Mediterranean, where thriving academic communities communicate primarily in Italian, French, Spanish and indeed Catalan. While such research tends to be less well known beyond the region as a consequence of its language of dissemination, the limited distribution obviously has no bearing whatsoever on the quality of the research and it therefore seemed imperative to involve a substantial number of non-English-speaking scholars.

The consequent need to translate or at least substantially edit a considerable number of chapters inevitably generated a fair amount of time-consuming work. Even if Cambridge University Press graciously agreed to support financially some of the additional translation and editing efforts required, we as well as several of our contributors owe much to the dedicated time and language skills put into these chapters by Ayla Çevik, Jeremy Hayne, Anthony Russell and Mariana Silva Porto, all of whom were based in Glasgow at one point or another during the process of editing these

chapters. In the end, our joint efforts should ensure a consistently high standard of argument and expression throughout the chapters of this volume, regardless of the authors' national, academic or linguistic backgrounds.

We also wish to thank Beatrice Rehl of Cambridge University Press for her vision and foresight: it was her idea that the Press should undertake such a volume, and we have only modified the way in which such a volume should be presented (see further comments on this point in the Main Introduction to this book).

We believe this volume offers readers new insights into the material and social practices of many different Mediterranean peoples during the Bronze and Iron Ages, presenting in particular those features that both connect and distinguish them. Contributors have written with deep understanding on a range of topics that motivate and structure Mediterranean archaeology today: insularity and connectivity; mobility, migration and colonisation; hybridisation and cultural encounters; materiality, memory and identity; community and household; life and death; and ritual and ideology. Its broad coverage of different approaches and contemporary archaeological practices should enable even general readers to understand better the people, ideas and materials that make up the world of Mediterranean archaeology today; at the same time, it should help the practitioners of Mediterranean archaeology to move the subject forward in new and dynamic ways.

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Mediterranean Introductions

A. Bernard Knapp and Peter van Dommelen

The Mediterranean World

Over the past 12,000–15,000 years, the coasts and islands around and within the Mediterranean Sea have spawned some of prehistory's most diverse human societies and material cultures, an array of cultural developments and material practices that continues to reverberate today. Over most of that time, and in particular after the emergence of deep-hulled sailing ships sometime during the third millennium BC (Broodbank 2009: 696–97), the Mediterranean served as an important transport route, along which moved people, ideas, ideologies, technologies, and all sorts of raw materials and finished goods. Those who settled around or on the Mediterranean's coasts and islands benefitted from the region's rich and diverse natural resources: the olive and vine (plus lentils, figs, pomegranates), a range of secondary products (milk, cheese, wool), and the harvests of the sea (fish, shellfish, turtles, salt).

In the eyes of *Annales* historian Fernand Braudel (1972), the Mediterranean world comprised a series of compact mountainous peninsulas with fertile plains on their fringes, and a fragmented complex of seas – the Aegean, Ionian, Adriatic, Tyrrhenian and Alboran. Coastal plains are uncommon, and characteristically narrow, with mountains rising starkly from the sea (Figure 0.1). The Mediterranean's semi-arid climate, marked by summer drought, winter rains and mild temperatures, supports a comparable plant regime: drought-resistant flora such as summer-only evergreens, scrub or dry heath. It is assumed that light woodlands were

once common in the Mediterranean, but when they were cleared for agriculture, the dense evergreen shrub, the *maquis* (*macchia*) – and *garrigue*, a thinner shrub – usually took over and remain ubiquitous in many parts of the Mediterranean, particularly on the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. Although limestone dominates the geology of the Mediterranean, there are also extensive outcrops of igneous rock on Cyprus (the source of copper ores) and in the central Mediterranean on Sicily, Sardinia and peninsular Italy. Mediterranean soils tend to be very thin and quite acidic, and usually are lacking in groundwater. Yet the archetypal Mediterranean landscape consists of *terra rossa* (deep red) soils, light-coloured limestone hills and the deep blue sea (Wainwright 2009).



Figure 0.1. Sea and mountains: view of the Iglesiasiente mountains meeting the Mediterranean Sea in southwest Sardinia (Masua, Iglesias) (Peter van Dommelen).

Whilst most discussions of the Mediterranean tend to focus on islands or coastlines, ports, merchants and mariners, and other associations with the sea, it is crucial not to overlook the mountains, the people who dwell in them, make their living in them and identify with them as opposed to the sea, or the outside world overall (McNeill 1992). The entire Mediterranean basin, coasts as well as islands, can be seen as a mountainous complex with fragmented relief, where

rugged fold mountains interface with older, rough-hewn tablelands (King *et al.* 1997: 8). Both Crete and Corsica are more mountainous than not, full of gorges, streams and caves, as well as pockets of flat or terraced land where crops (trees, vines) could grow. Until very recently, most Cretans or Corsicans were hunters, shepherds or farmers, not fishermen. On Sardinia and Cyprus, the mountains and their resources (wood, metals, charcoal, wild animals) have also played major roles in island life and subsistence. Sardinians, in fact, are notoriously seen as bandits and shepherds rather than sailors and pirates; often they have been stigmatised as living ‘with their backs to the sea’ (van Dommelen 1998: 13). Even on Sicily, with its broad agricultural plains, Etna and the mountains surrounding it seem to have served as a cultural divide between west and east, deeper than any separation between Sicily as a whole and the Calabrian mainland (Leighton 1999: 2–4, 13).

Mountain and sea, forest and orchard, town/village and country – all form the backdrop to long-term human settlement in the Mediterranean basin, and are part of what has been termed ‘the Mediterranean *as experience*’ (King *et al.* 1997: 5). At least some scholars – archaeologists, historians, geographers, ethnographers – have viewed the Mediterranean more in terms of its unity than its diversity, and still do so to varying degrees (e.g. Pitt-Rivers 1963; Peristiany 1966; Horden and Purcell 2000; Morris 2003; Bromberger 2008). It is equally clear, however, that the Mediterranean also has its share of social, economic and ideological divisions, boundaries and contradictions, not least between the European north and the African south (corresponding roughly to the modern divide between Christianity and Islam). Although we might justifiably retrodict some of these divisions back into prehistory, in each case we could also highlight the intermediary role of the Mediterranean as both a frontier and a bridge, an area where human mobility and cultural encounters led to ‘interlaced’ social, cultural and material practices that both created and defined Mediterranean (pre)histories. Historians who see cultural integrity and at least a ‘borderline’ identity within the Mediterranean also acknowledge that this results

from the hybridisation of people, cultures and ideas (e.g. Peristianis 2000: 185–88; Bromberger 2008; Chambers 2008).

Mediterranean Archaeologies

A social archaeology of the Mediterranean focuses on people and their daily practices; on households, monumental architecture, communities and human settlements in the wider landscape; on the interconnecting sea and seascapes. People used these landscapes and seascapes to sustain themselves physically and mentally: villages, fields, forests, rivers, hills, harbours and the sea all enabled them to produce food, to exchange goods, to express symbolism and design, to make social statements, to commemorate events – i.e. to live their lives and bury their dead. As social archaeologists, we seek to understand the meanings, memories and legacies of all these people, practices, spaces, places and things.

For many archaeologists and historians who work in the Mediterranean, the defining moment in its history is marked by developments associated with the Classical world during the latter half of the first millennium BC. Yet the cultural ‘integration’ achieved in the first instance by Phoenicians and Greeks, and then its extension and politico-economic expansion under the Romans, was something entirely new to the Mediterranean world. Far more typical of the Mediterranean region over its *longue durée* was the autonomy and distinctive material and social practices seen in different regions, only a few of which interacted in any other way than spontaneously. In our view, these earlier periods – prehistoric and protohistoric – offer a dramatic counterpoint to any perceived cohesiveness during the Classical era; indeed, they are more consistent with the socio-economic, political and cultural plurality of the Mediterranean world today, even if the experience of modernity and prehistory differ in most other respects. Mediterranean prehistory – and the rich body of data that constitute it – thus warrants study on its own terms, increasingly so as the sites and objects that it comprises are

now seen by many as a vanishing resource (Cherry 2003: 156–58; Stanley Price 2003).

Not long ago, Renfrew (2003: 315–18) singled out two major shortcomings of Mediterranean archaeology as practiced in the last quarter of the twentieth century: (1) the chronological and conceptual divide that separates the study of prehistoric Mediterranean societies from research into historical or Classical societies; and (2) the lack of comparative work and insights into Mediterranean societies and cultures, especially in light of the dramatic increase in published archaeological sites and materials. Renfrew's concerns were directed at the Aegean region, but in our view these issues are pervasive throughout Mediterranean archaeology. Indeed, it seems clear that the 'segmentation and hyper-specialisation' of Mediterranean archaeological research (Cherry 2004: 236) have discouraged comparative studies of all the material, cultural and socio-economic features and trends that interconnect or overlap in this region. Yet the deep time perspective hailed by archaeologists as their unique and distinctive window onto the past can only be enhanced by a comparative approach, and elsewhere we have already taken some preliminary but incisive steps in that direction (i.e. the various studies through time and across Mediterranean space in van Dommelen and Knapp 2010; see now also Broodbank 2013). In the present volume, we continue on this path, and aim (1) to break down further the prehistoric–historical divide, (2) to broaden comparative perspectives by engaging scholars who work throughout the Bronze–Iron Age Mediterranean, and (3) to present new syntheses of a wide range of Mediterranean archaeological sites, materials and associated ideas heretofore unpublished in anything like their present form.

Prehistory and Protohistory in the Bronze–Iron Age Mediterranean

Over the past two decades, new archaeological evidence and new ways of thinking about the past have transformed our

understanding of the prehistory and earliest history of the Mediterranean world. As already emphasised, the archaeology of this region has placed much emphasis on the grand civilizations of the eastern or central Mediterranean (Greece and Rome), often ignoring or at best overshadowing the cultures to the west, making ‘Mediterranean archaeology’ virtually synonymous with ‘Classical archaeology’. Recent fieldwork and research, however, have brought previously peripheral regions and cultures – such as the western Mediterranean islands and littoral, and the Phoenicians – into sharp relief, enabling a more balanced view of the Mediterranean region as a whole.

Paradoxically, the vast amount of new information available has not yielded a revitalised pan-regional perspective, but rather made Mediterranean archaeology a subject far too vast for any single author to command (but cf. Broodbank 2013). Acknowledging the complexities involved in dealing with Mediterranean connectivities overall (the ‘Mediterraneanization’ of Morris 2003), we feel that the debate over whether one can actually do ‘Mediterranean studies’ (Herzfeld 2005; Horden and Purcell 2006: 726–29) has become rather stale, at least when it comes to Mediterranean *prehistory*. To be sure, the trend has been towards localised studies meant to exemplify a larger Mediterranean context (e.g. Given and Knapp 2003; Alcock and Cherry 2004; Barker *et al.* 2007; van Dommelen and Gómez Bellard 2008). These highly focused studies are rich in detail, provide invaluable sources of basic data, and are essential for understanding micro-scale variations across the region. Otherwise, single-subject volumes have focused on the mechanisms behind various phenomena of social change in specific parts of the region (e.g. Tronchetti 1988; Webster 1996; Chapman 2003; Dickinson 2006; Gracia Alonso 2008; Knapp 2008, 2013; Sagona and Zimansky 2009; Rodríguez Díaz 2009).

Three syntheses of the region during prehistory have been attempted in recent years. The first, by Patton (1996), adopts theoretical positions stretched too tightly to cover the unwieldy and often mishandled data. The second, edited by

Blake and Knapp (2005), gives a full introduction to the archaeology of Mediterranean prehistory; it covers a wide range of data, method and theory up to 2003–2004, and confronts head-on the notion of a ‘Mediterranean prehistory’. The third, by Broodbank (2013), achieves what no other volume has, covering some five million years of Mediterranean pre- and protohistory, from the formation of the sea to the dawn of the Classical world; its coverage is Mediterranean-wide and it is fully up-to-date in everything it treats. With the exception of Broodbank’s study, most others have ignored the Iron Age entirely. The latter is the focus of a recent study by Hodos (2006), one that does span the length of the Mediterranean but does so through just three regional case studies and thus falls back in line with the trend signalled above. One further volume, embracing the breadth and width of the Mediterranean, is focused on historical periods, covering Classical to medieval times (Horden and Purcell 2000). The more recent post-Roman and medieval periods are served by the magisterial studies of scholars like Goitein (1999) and Abulafia (2011); these, however, are historical rather than archaeological in nature, and the latter actually presents very outmoded views on the prehistory and protohistory of the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, as the volumes by Horden and Purcell (2000), Blake and Knapp (2005) and Broodbank (2013) have made clear, there is much to be gained by confronting ‘the differences that resemble’ and by considering in which ways the region is an entity, rather than just the southern edge of Europe or the northern edge of Africa (see especially Broodbank 2013; Purcell and Horden n.d.).

Given this situation, we felt that a carefully theorised, tightly edited and thematically organised work on the Bronze and Iron Ages of the Mediterranean world would enable archaeologists, anthropologists and ancient historians to transcend the borders that separate Europe and Africa or the Middle East, and help to break down the political divisions that fracture this region into nation-states. Beyond the embedded commonalities seen in climate or geography, or even social interactions, the present volume provides new insights into the social identities of Mediterranean peoples,

and helps to disentangle what connects and distinguishes them, particularly with respect to their material, mental and social histories.

In order to produce a volume that is innovative in terms of its themes, orientations and contributors, we took a bold new step in synthesising the multicultural, multivocal Mediterranean world of the Bronze and Iron Ages. Through initial discussions of such a volume with several possible contributors, we learned that virtually no one was interested in producing yet another summary of their specialist field or area of research for an encyclopaedic work or ‘handbook’ on the Mediterranean. Therefore, within the thematic parameters set for the volume, we decided to invite each contributor to select a topic on which *they would like to write*, and to work with them to settle on exactly how such a contribution would best be integrated within the overall work.

Each contributor was specifically selected based on their previous work in the Mediterranean world, from the Gates of Gibraltar to the Levantine coast. They are either well-established scholars known for innovative approaches to their field, or dynamic younger archaeologists whom we believe will breathe new life into their respective scholarly niche. These authors address a range of self-selected topics on Mediterranean archaeology, and present them in a theoretically informed manner. Perennial questions about the region’s archaeology – e.g. social complexity, trade and interaction, and subsistence practices – are not explicitly considered but rather folded into our general themes, which aim to move beyond current practice, and to reflect topical interests in everything from the body and materiality, to social identities, to mobility and hybridisation practices. Authors were not asked to conform to a narrow theoretical stance. They selected their topics based on the volume’s themes, and adopted the approach best suited to addressing that topic in close consultation with us, in order to provide overall coherence to the volume.

We do not claim that the present volume offers fully encyclopaedic coverage of all Mediterranean regions in both

the Bronze and Iron Ages, simply because not all lands and seas have received similar, let alone equal, intensity of research and resources. One region that has long been and remains understudied is north Africa, with the obvious exception of Egypt, and the general lack of attention to this region before the Roman or even Phoenician and Punic periods is reflected by the absence of a north African chapter in this book. Cyprus, by contrast, has a density of archaeological research, at least in the southern half of the island, that is matched by few areas, which explains why five chapters take the Cypriot archaeological record as their point of departure. By and large, however, we submit that the chapters in this volume reflect not just the outcome of our idiosyncratic selection process but also the preferences and biases of the discipline at large.

One bias that we have particularly worked hard to transcend is that of academic and national traditions. Because archaeological practice and theory in the western Mediterranean in particular are characterised by strong national communities with their own debates, usually conducted in their own language, we have deliberately looked beyond the English-speaking archaeological world and invited a substantial number of colleagues from around the Mediterranean Sea itself. Our guiding principle has consistently been that chapters should draw on regional evidence and discuss the broader themes selected in order to contribute to the overarching aim of this volume, namely to produce an archaeology of the Mediterranean. The result, we feel, is a wide-ranging collection of studies that roam the Mediterranean mountains, coastlands and seas from the Atlantic shores beyond the Strait of Gibraltar to the Nile and Euphrates Valleys, and that seek to bring out major connections and distinctions.

In order to foreground the connecting themes and to downplay any expectations of encyclopaedic coverage, we have also refrained from organising the chapters by region or period. Instead, we have set out seven themes that we consider as of major and particular Mediterranean significance. These are:

- *Insularity and Connectivity*, because islands make up a major portion of the Mediterranean and negotiating the seas between them has been a fact of life for many inhabitants across time;
- *Mobility, Migration and Colonisation*, because Mediterranean people have never stopped moving across the seas once they reached the islands and other far distant shores;
- *Hybridisation and Cultural Encounters*, because migration and connectivity have always led to contacts and encounters that did not remain without consequences;
- *Materiality, Memory and Identity*, because people who moved across the seas took with them their own material life world as well as their memories and sense of self;
- *Community and Household*, because these have always been the key units of everyday life through which Mediterranean people experienced contacts with each other and organised their lives;
- *Life and Death*, because it is not just in life but also in death that communities, memories and identities were forged and reconstituted;
- *Ritual and Ideology*, because belief systems and normative concepts provide the necessary guidance to human behaviour for dealing with both life and death.

Even if we have avoided themes like ‘society’ and ‘exchange’, which are both inherently relevant and too generic to be useful, the seven themes we have chosen are inevitably broad. The order of these themes and of the chapters within each section has been established to capture the partial overlap between them and to encourage comparison and contrast.

In order to facilitate comparative discussion by contrasting and integrating the material presented in the different chapters, we provide brief orientations to each of these thematic sections, in addition to this introductory chapter. In such a way, we hope to integrate effectively and concisely

the different, if not disparate, parts, perspectives, approaches and practices as well as languages that today characterise the ever-changing arena that is Mediterranean archaeology. If the coverage of our book is seen as less than comprehensive and systematic for the times and all the places of the Bronze and Iron Ages, it is nonetheless guided by these thematic schema through which the prehistoric and early historic Mediterranean should not only be better understood, but also help to move the subject forward in a way heretofore never conceived.

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Insularity and Connectivity

Islands invariably call to mind insularity, and island archaeology today represents a dynamic and still-innovating subfield of archaeology. Emerging from a series of pioneering studies carried out during the 1970–80s (e.g. Evans 1977; Cherry 1981; Kirch 1986; Terrell 1986; Keegan and Diamond 1987), most of which were inspired by the work of Vayda and Rappaport (1963), island archaeology became firmly entrenched in analysing biogeographic factors such as insularity and isolation; size, distance and configuration; dispersal, adaptation or extinction. More recently, Rainbird (2004: 1–2, 63; 2007: 33–35) has argued that the narrow use of a biogeographic approach is overly deterministic, and that the old notion of islands as ‘laboratories’ is too restrictive. Indeed, living on an island involves social and cultural factors that may trump biogeographic principles (Broodbank 2000: 26–32; Efstratiou 2012: 33), but it would still be remiss to attempt to study islands and insularity without considering both limitations and possibilities, including those stemming from biogeography, biology and the environment.

Connectivity involves the means of travel, the mobility of people and goods, and social exchange and communications. According to Skeates (2009: 556), connectivity ‘...refers to the social and geographical interdependence of small-scale, locally specific phenomena (including micro-regions, places, peoples, economic strategies, and interactions) with a dynamic network of relations enjoyed by them with the wider world’. Maritime mobility has been a key feature of island life in the Mediterranean throughout prehistoric and

historic times: Horden and Purcell (2000: 224–30), for example, suggest that various aspects of production on Aegean islands resulted from ‘*all around connectivity*’. Islanders and coastal dwellers often formed open, or ‘imagined’ communities, sharing materialities and communicating by sea (Gosden and Pavlides 1994: 163). In terms of encounters with distant islands or other lands, island communities tend to develop a strong sense of their common identity, when insular attitudes and differences take on special currency (Parker Pearson 2004: 129; Constantakopoulou 2005).

Insularity has been described as ‘the quality of being isolated as a result of living on islands, or of being somewhat detached in outlook and experience’ (Knapp 2008: 18). Thus, we might think of islands as isolated places, and regard islanders as detached, or insular, in their thinking. In reality, however, people adopt aspects of insularity in many different ways. Insular living, for example, may be a temporary phenomenon, or something that is done repeatedly but only seasonally (Finlayson 2004: 18).

Islands themselves have been defined rather prosaically as land masses smaller than a continent, entirely surrounded by water (Fitzpatrick 2004: 6). Terrell (1999: 240), more spiritedly, suggests that ‘...islands are what they are because they are living spaces (habitats) surrounded by radical shifts in habitat’. Islands certainly elicit notions of remoteness, in part because of the length of the journeys it takes to reach them (even today), in part because of the sensation of being in such a distant, separate space once they are reached (Renfrew 2004: 275). The highly successful TV series *Lost* explored endless ideas about the (mis-)adventures of living on an island. Beyond even this notion of remoteness, islands are also seen as sleepy backwaters, beyond the pale of modern civilisation, where people of similar minds live at a slower, more natural pace (McKechnie 2002: 128).

The sea that separates an island from the nearest mainland or other island may be seen as an immense threshold. Whether one regards it as a bridge to what is near and familiar, or as a barrier from what is distant and exotic,

depends on individual mind-sets (Helms 1988: 24–25). Regarding the sea as barrier, some island societies exhibit what are typically viewed as ‘strange’ material expressions or extreme cultural developments, for example the megalithic temples of Malta (Grima 2001; Robb 2001; Skeates 2008), or what has been called the ‘Easter Island syndrome’ (Parker Pearson 2004: 129). However, ideas and practices and things that appear to be strange or exotic to a mainlander, or even to a sailor, may be perfectly mundane or normal to an islander, part of her/his *habitus*. In other words, social attitudes to the sea and to voyaging condition the extent to which islanders are seen to be isolated from or connected to the other islands, mainlands and peoples that surround them.

In sum, even though islands serve as essentialising metaphors for isolation and insularity (Robb 2001), throughout prehistory they were exposed repeatedly to wider social, political, cultural and economic networks of mobility, interaction and exchange. Merchants, mariners and monarchs alike repeatedly sought ‘exotic’ resources or raw materials readily accessible on certain islands (e.g. copper on Cyprus; iron on Elba; obsidian on Melos, Sardinia or Lipari). These islands thus came to serve as points of connectivity, where maritime peoples met and communicated, where long-distance trade was conducted and island alliances formed or developed (Parker Pearson 2004: 129). And so Horden and Purcell (2000: 76) exclaimed that islands were literally ‘in the swim’ of things, surrounded by the sea, providers of exploitable resources.

Insularity may be felt to some degree on islands large or small, throughout any island group. As the chapters in this section demonstrate, insularity is not a condition that only or mostly affects the first colonisation of islands, even if many island studies have tended to concentrate on the early phases of island life. The physical aspects of insularity thus have to be seen in the context of social and spatial factors that operate differently in each place and time (Efstratiou 2012: 34). Insularity is therefore not a fixed geographic

condition or environmental constraint that can provide a monolithic explanation of biological evolution, much less of cultural diversity or social practices. Instead, it should be regarded as a facet of island living at all times with the potential to modify social, political or economic developments in unique and unpredictable ways.

The chapters in this section treat islands large and small, their interconnectedness or isolation at different times and in different ways (the Cyclades, Malta and Sicily, Sardinia), their early exploitation and subsistence strategies (the Balearics), their transformation from prehistoric fortresses to proto-urban centres (Sardinia). Drawing on the theme of insularity and connectivity, all these chapters speak eloquently by and for themselves.

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1 A Little History of Mediterranean Island Prehistory

John F. Cherry and Thomas P. Leppard

Abstract

Before the mid-1970s, a distinctive subfield of ‘Mediterranean island archaeology’ cannot be said to have existed; there were only archaeologies of individual islands or island groups. So far as the Mediterranean is concerned, an interest in studying islands in a collective and comparative framework, and trying to understand what impact the quality of insularity may have on material culture and human behaviors, can be traced directly to two influential articles by J.D. Evans in the 1970s. This chapter addresses the development of Mediterranean island prehistory from Childe to Evans’s watershed papers, and charts the emergence of a comparative and explicitly quantitative island archaeology, heavily informed by biogeography, in the 1980s and 1990s. It then moves on to the critique of the ‘new’ Mediterranean island archaeology that emerged in the early twenty-first century, and highlights how it has opened up new avenues of inquiry in insular prehistory, not least by emphasizing connectivity, island identities, and the formation of distinct island communities. Using data from the period between the later Upper Palaeolithic and the Late Bronze Age, it seeks to draw out the practical and heuristic consequences of different paradigms, and to suggest future areas of development in Mediterranean island prehistory.

Introduction

The distinctiveness of the Mediterranean, an inland sea as its name indicates, surely depends to a significant extent on the multitude of islands it contains. Indeed, for many of the sea- and sun-seeking holidaymakers who seasonally double the population of the region (Inglis 2000), ‘the Med’ is virtually synonymous with the island-based tourist destinations – Mallorca, Corfu, Mykonos, Cyprus – to which they throng. Other inland seas enclose islands, of course, but not at all like the Mediterranean in their size and distribution: for instance, the Caspian Sea, one-sixth its size, has numerous islands, but all small, very close to the coast, and mostly uninhabited. In the Mediterranean, by contrast, some 150 islands are larger than 10 sq km, 50 larger than 100 sq km, and nine surpass 1000 sq km. An exact count of all its islands is unrealistic, however, because there also exists a myriad of tiny islets, some barely cresting the surface – certainly more than 5000 islands in total (Figure 1.1).

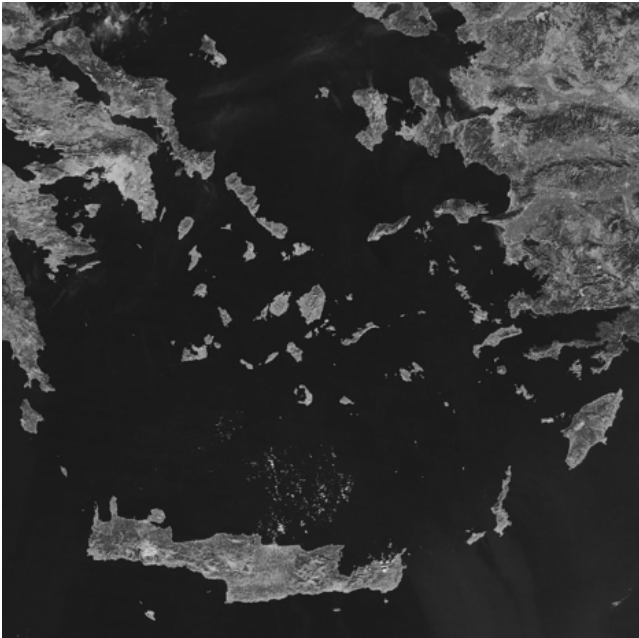


Figure 1.1. Satellite image of the Aegean and its closely crowded islandscape. (NASA, The Visible Earth – <http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/>).

This, moreover, is merely 'our' Mediterranean, now. In reality, the islands we study today are remnants of a drowned landscape, much more of which was above water at the glacial lowstand of the sea (some 120 m below current levels), about 17,000 years ago. Sea-level rise since the glacial maximum, to -25 m around 8000 BP and -7 m around 5000 BP, created a dynamic succession of island configurations dramatically different from the present (van Andel and Shackleton 1982; Shackleton *et al.* 1984; Lambeck 1996; Lambeck and Chapell 2001; Lambeck and Purcell 2005), to which prehistorians interested in the post-Pleistocene occupation of the islands must attend. Yet even a glance at the map of today's Mediterranean, which closely approximates the way things have been for the past several thousand years, reveals some major contrasts in size and spatial arrangement of islands within the several separate zones into which the basin can be divided (east Mediterranean, Aegean, Illyrian-Ionian, Sicilian Channel, Tyrrhenian, and west Mediterranean). This immediately makes the Mediterranean 'something of a unique case' (Broodbank 2000: 38) when compared with other island theaters such as southwest Oceania, Polynesia, Island Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, or the Aleutians. Furthermore, as we now know from decades of research in various circum-Mediterranean countries, there has been human occupation for tens or hundreds of thousands of years in areas in sight and within easy reach of some of the islands; and yet (leaving aside the very new and controversial discoveries at Plakias on Crete; Strasser *et al.* 2010; 2011), the first settlement on almost all Mediterranean islands is a development no earlier than the Mesolithic, and in the majority of cases the Neolithic or later (Dawson 2008).

These patterns, both geographical and archaeological, might have been expected to encourage a comparative island archaeology of the Mediterranean, both between different parts of the region and between the Mediterranean and other island-rich parts of the globe. In this respect, the Mediterranean enjoys some advantages, since the exploration of prehistoric sites on some of its islands began

almost as early as in some of the surrounding mainland regions, and generally much earlier than it did in, for example, most of the Caribbean or Polynesia. Yet before the 1970s, a distinctive subfield of ‘Mediterranean island archaeology’ cannot be said to have existed: there were only archaeologies of individual islands or island groups.

So far as the Mediterranean is concerned, an interest in studying islands in a collective and comparative framework, and trying to understand what impact the quality of insularity may have had on material culture signatures, can be traced directly to a couple of influential articles by John Evans (1973; 1977). Much of the subsequent work they inspired tended to focus on patterns and processes of earliest island settlement, to fixate on islands as supposedly isolated places, to be heavily influenced by island biogeography, and to emphasize alleged oddities of island cultures. Meanwhile, the head start enjoyed by Pacific island archaeology was also being eroded by developments in the Caribbean theater, as well as a growing number of studies of islands in peri-Arctic waters. In all of these areas, including the Mediterranean, the past 30 years have seen a steadily growing adherence to more theoretically informed perspectives, and the subfield’s distinctiveness has been recognized by the creation of the *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology*, *Island Studies Journal*, *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures*, and so on. Recent years have seen an expectable reaction to these developments. Certain scholars have critiqued the alleged Eurocentric notions of what it means to be an island/islander, doubting that few islands have ever been truly isolated, and proposing new approaches that revolve around concepts such as ‘landscapes’ or ‘seascapes.’ More recently yet, interest has shifted to an emphasis on connectivity, island identities, and self-perceptions, and the formation of distinct island communities.

This chapter, then, aims to discuss these changing intellectual and disciplinary underpinnings of island archaeology as a component of Mediterranean prehistory. We begin by asking why island archaeology in the

Mediterranean was such a late development, relative to major island theaters elsewhere. We then outline the distinctive Mediterranean island archaeologies that developed in the 1980s and 1990s, the critiques of them posed in the 1990s and 2000s, and some of the themes that are central in current work. Our discussion seeks to draw out the practical and heuristic consequences of different paradigms, and to suggest areas of current development in Mediterranean island prehistory.

Mediterranean Island Prehistory prior to the 1970s

Before the appearance of John Evans's seminal work (1973; 1977) on the utility of islands as 'laboratories for the study of culture change,' there existed very little literature in Mediterranean prehistory that attempted an explicitly 'island' approach. The failure of an insular archaeology to develop in Mediterranean prehistory until the 1970s places it a couple of decades, at least, behind developments in other major maritime theaters (e.g., Sahlins 1955, and his ideas about 'esoteric efflorescence' in the Pacific). Why was this the case? The lag, we believe, can be attributed largely to the dominance of a Childean diffusionist paradigm in prehistoric Mediterranean studies; and it was only as a result of the increasingly untenable nature of this framework in the 1960s that there emerged the possibility for a truly insular archaeology to develop.

Childe (1930; 1957) conceived of maritime Europe in the Neolithic and Bronze Age as an essentially contiguous zone, through which cultural and social innovations could flow with relative ease. A central component to this thought was the perceived chronological primacy of the development of 'civilization' in southwest Asia (Childe 1936). Considering the ancient Near East to be the core of Old World social complexity, Childe envisaged a gradual spread outward from this core, either via demic processes or by adoption and acculturation. In this scheme, the Bronze Age cultures of the Aegean derived the trappings of social complexity from the

pristine societies of southwest Asia and the Nile Valley. In turn, these sociocultural, symbolic, and technological suites were passed on, via macro-diffusionist processes, to the megalithic cultures of the central and western Mediterranean (Childe 1957: 16–18, 48–56, 252–64). Thus, the parallels both within the Bronze Age of the western Mediterranean, and also beyond it, in Iberia, Brittany, and ultimately Wessex, could be explained by the gradual spread of cultural forms flowing along maritime routes, all with an ultimate origin in the east. In Childe's conception, the advent of 'civilization' became increasingly recent from southeast to northwest, in a majestic cline reaching from Sumer to Wessex (Figure 1.2). While noting the sometimes highly esoteric aspects of the insular cultures of the western Mediterranean, he understood these to represent the peculiar expression of eastern cultural forms in western contexts (Childe 1930: 193–94, 197; 1957: 261).



Figure 1.2. Map of the Mediterranean and Europe showing the chronological links used by Gordon Childe to date prehistoric cultures, with reference to the historical calendars of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (Renfrew 1973: fig. 6).

Concurrent with Childe's synthetic works of the 1920s and 1930s, a diffusionist framework, itself rather insular in

nature if not (consciously) in subject matter, was being developed at the inception of eastern Mediterranean maritime prehistory. The excavation and publication of Knossos by Sir Arthur Evans established Cretan ('Minoan') archaeology as a coherent discipline, but more specifically provided evidence of trans-pelagic influences on an insular material culture that demanded explanation (Evans 1921; 1927). Noting the striking cultural changes between the Neolithic and Bronze Age phases of the tell's occupation, and the apparent debt owed by the latter to the Nile Valley, Evans supposed Early Minoan I to be a product of profound Egyptian influence in the form of outright migration, which transformed '...the rude island culture' (Evans 1921: 16, 66; 1927: 25–59; Pendlebury 1939: 37). Yet he was equally comfortable in looking to the west, noting parallels between Middle Minoan II motifs and the spirals of Maltese Tarxien.

Like Childe, Evans saw the Mediterranean as a great connector, facilitating cultural osmosis from east to west, positing cultural continuities over large expanses of space and time, and the gradualized spread of these continuities from the south to the north and west (cf. Mosso 1907: 329). In Evans's view, this acculturation (for Crete, at least) was not passive: 'Insular, but not isolated, it [Crete] was thus able to develop a civilization of its own on native lines and to accept suggestions from the Egyptian or Asiatic side without itself being dominated by foreign conventionalism' (Evans 1921: 25). Nonetheless, increasingly large data sets, now from the Cyclades as well as Crete, seemed to confirm the understanding of the insular eastern Mediterranean as enabling the flow of culture from southwest Asia to points west. The mounting evidence for 'Minoanizing' processes – taken to indicate a Cretan thalassocracy (Atkinson *et al.* 1904) – further hinted at the degree to which the maritime Mediterranean had been interconnected in prehistory. It was these models, and those like them, that Childe integrated into an explanatory mechanism on a much larger scale, to account for apparent continuities at the continental, as opposed to purely regional level (1930; 1957).

Childe's immense erudition, and his ability to articulate coherently vast and diverse data, rendered his narrative in *The Dawn of European Civilisation* (1957) the most powerful vision of prehistoric circum-Mediterranean cultural development during his lifetime, and even after his death. Seminal studies of the prehistoric archaeology of the major western groups relied upon a Childean diffusionist mechanism to explain rapid change or technological innovation. Bernabò Brea (1957) and Lilliu (1962), for Sicily and Sardinia respectively, employed Childe's conception of the dynamics of culture change, invoking invasion and migration as the causal factors lying behind the significant cultural watersheds of the Neolithic and Bronze Age (e.g., Bernabò Brea 1957: 38, 41, 136). Again, the model was pan-Mediterranean: technological advances reached the shores of the western Mediterranean islands carried by Aegean longboats (Bernabò Brea 1957: 41; cf. Broodbank 2000). The lone dissenting voice during this period was John Evans who, in his work on the Maltese sequence (Evans 1959), was keen to emphasize the enigmatic aspects of (what was then understood to be) the Maltese Bronze Age. While seeking to situate the Maltese archipelago within the wider western Mediterranean context, Evans (1959: 65, 160) nonetheless conceived of the 'esoteric' Maltese temple architecture, and the apparent lack of extensive use of metals, as indicative of the development of idiosyncrasies resulting from relative cultural isolation (1959: 30, 133). Nonetheless, Evans still adhered in large part to the general Childean framework and its chronological component.

The dominance of Childe's compelling master narrative appears to be a primary reason for the lack of any consideration of the unique properties of islands as bounded environmental units. In Childean terms, they were of course hardly bounded at all: with the Mediterranean seen as a connector rather than divider, islands were unusually highly exposed to maritime-borne cultural innovation and diffusion. Under this scheme, the palatial societies of the Aegean and the (admittedly esoteric) insular cultures of the western Mediterranean were merely parts of a far wider region that was relentlessly subject to the impacts of Near

Eastern innovations that provided the mechanisms of cultural change.

If the dominance of Childe's legacy into the 1960s explains the failure of an explicitly insular Mediterranean archaeology to emerge, then the breakdown of the diffusionist paradigm likewise played a decisive role in its development. As became clear in the late 1960s and 1970s (Renfrew 1967; 1968; 1973; but cf. Trump 1980), the long-accepted view that many aspects of prehistoric culture had their origins in the Near East and only later, via the Mediterranean, diffused into 'barbarian' Europe became increasingly difficult to sustain. Renfrew's book *Before Civilization* (1973) brilliantly demonstrated the revolutionary effects of the tree-ring-based re-calibration of radiocarbon dates in snapping many of the basic links on which the traditional chronologies had been grounded. For example, the earliest cultural phases on Malta became earlier by almost a millennium, with consequences for the entire Neolithic and Bronze Age chronology developed by Evans in the 1950s (Renfrew 1973: 147–66; Evans 1977). With the Maltese Tarxien period now ending at ca. 2200 BC or even earlier (Renfrew 1973: 152), the explanatory connection between the megalithic architecture of the western Mediterranean and its alleged Aegean or eastern Mediterranean origins became untenable.

This dislocation had two consequences for the archaeology of the western basin. First, it suggested that the trajectories of cultural development there were more temporally heterogeneous than had been realized, with the Maltese Neolithic separated from the Sardinian Nuraghic and the Balearic Talayotic; consequently, they could no longer plausibly be regarded as outcomes of the same process. More importantly, the severing of Childe's temporal equivalencies removed the causal mechanisms for the development of nascent social complexity throughout the western Mediterranean and northwestern Europe in general. The kicking away of the exogenous explanatory crutch necessitated the development of new modes of thinking about the development of novel cultural forms in island

contexts.

Matters were different in the eastern Mediterranean, where the advent of calibrated radiocarbon dates did not entirely dislocate the correlation of the Aegean Bronze Age with established Egyptian chronologies, as first proposed by Sir Arthur Evans (1921). Renfrew (1973: figs 20–21) depicted this as an arc or ‘fault line’ running around the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean, within which dates in the third millennium BC were not much altered by the re-calibration. Nevertheless, the rethinking of chronologies, cultural dynamics, and the explanation of cultural change made necessary in the west by the ‘radiocarbon revolution’ also prompted the development of alternative models for the study of Aegean islands. John Evans, who had already stressed the development of cultural idiosyncrasy in the Maltese island group, published the Neolithic-period excavations at Saliagos in the Cyclades and at Knossos on Crete in a manner that placed a new emphasis on the importance of the operation of local cultural processes, constrained by insularity (Evans and Renfrew 1968: 91; Warren *et al.* 1968: 275).

These various developments were foundational for two publications that – despite varying greatly in scope, length, and aim – turned out to be of huge significance in making the argument for the role of endogenous processes in the development of social complexity in insular contexts. Evans’s article ‘Islands as laboratories of culture change’ (1973) – essentially a manifesto, and extraordinarily influential, despite its extreme brevity – arose from an awareness that new modes of explanation were required to account for the cultural developments witnessed on Malta and the other western islands in prehistory. Given his earlier conviction that local and insular processes played a significant role in the emergence of idiosyncratic forms (Evans 1959: 30, 133), it is unsurprising that he situated local process at the heart of his generalizing claim for the utility of islands in the study of culture change. Renfrew’s massive and magisterial study *The Emergence of Civilisation* (1972) – based on data from the prehistoric Cyclades, though ranging much further

afield, and also adopting an explicitly systems-theory approach – likewise provided support for the insight that there could exist a functional relationship between insular environments and specific trajectories of cultural evolution. Both Evans and Renfrew, significantly, made reference to Pacific island data, the first time that Mediterranean island archaeology had looked beyond its own narrow purview. These publications enabled the development of the application of an insular archaeology at a pan-Mediterranean level.

Developments in the 1980s and 1990s

The collaboration between Evans and Renfrew in 1964–65 in the excavations on the tiny islet of Saliagos was certainly important in providing, for the first time, detailed evidence of later Neolithic settlement in the Cyclades, but the resulting report (Evans and Renfrew 1968) was largely traditional in outlook. Fieldwork undertaken on another Cycladic island a few years later indicates how fast the conceptualization of island prehistory was changing. Renfrew's excavations at the Bronze Age town of Phylakopi on Melos (1974–77) took place within the context of an island-wide survey directed by John Cherry, arguably the first example in an insular setting of the types of systematic, intensive surveys that were shortly to proliferate in many parts of the Mediterranean (Cherry 2003; Alcock and Cherry 2004).

The monograph on the Melos project, *An Island Polity* (Renfrew and Wagstaff 1982), brought together the researches of an interdisciplinary group of prehistorians, classicists, geologists, geomorphologists, and geographers, all focused on a theoretical framework set out very explicitly in its opening pages. It emphasized a diachronic systems approach, characteristic of its time, with the island ecosystem of Melos serving as the primary focus, even though set within a regional system (the Cyclades), an areal system (the Aegean), and a larger world-system (the east Mediterranean and beyond). A generally biogeographic outlook was placed front and center, and indeed one of the

mantras of island biogeography – ‘In the science of biogeography the island is the first unit that the mind can pick out and begin to comprehend’ (MacArthur and Wilson 1967: 3) – appeared on the very first page, along with references to other island theorists of the time (Vayda and Rappaport 1963; Fosberg 1963). Whatever the verdict may be on this project three decades later, there is an undeniable sense of excitement emerging from the chapters of this monograph that the Mediterranean world had excellent data and original theoretical perspectives to contribute to the developing field of global island archaeology.

This was the context of a paper by Cherry (1981), often cited as foundational for comparative Mediterranean island prehistory. It was prompted, in part, by the realization that clear evidence existed, from the Franchthi Cave in the Argolid, that obsidian had been acquired on Melos as early as the eleventh millennium BC (Perlès 1979), and yet survey on Melos, including the obsidian quarry sites themselves (Torrence 1986), had not revealed clear evidence of pre-Neolithic activities. This encouraged a wider examination of the pattern and process of Mediterranean island colonization, set within a generally biogeographical framework, used as a heuristic tool. The intention was not to assert that islands had been colonized according to the same principles as those of plants and animals – a brilliant paper by Broodbank and Strasser (1991) showed how wrong such an assumption would be in the case of the deliberate initial colonization of Crete, for example – but rather to evaluate how the size of islands and their relative accessibility might correlate with the observed patterns of colonization (cf. Diamond 1977).

This broad-brush study yielded some provocative empirical generalizations. One was that – contrary to a number of overly optimistic claims based on weak data – colonization of Mediterranean islands prior to the Neolithic was vanishingly rare, despite proxy evidence (such as the distribution of Melian obsidian) for earlier knowledge of, and movement among, some of the islands. Cherry’s review also indicated that, as in most other parts of the world, the

settlement of islands is a relatively late phenomenon, at least compared to surrounding mainland regions: with certain notable exceptions, this did not begin until the Neolithic, took off only in the earlier stages of the Bronze Age (i.e., between ca. seven and four millennia ago), and followed a sequence that, to some extent, reflected island size and remoteness (Malone 1999; Dawson 2008). Moreover, the proportion of islands occupied by a given stage appeared to be higher in the west Mediterranean than in the east, at least until the late third millennium BC, an observation perhaps explained by disparities in rank-size distributions in either area.

Unsurprisingly, given the huge increase in fieldwork results and the major growth of interest in an island archaeology of the Mediterranean over the subsequent 30 years, some of these conclusions have fared better than others. The accumulation of new data, for example, has essentially erased the east–west distinction just noted (Figure 1.3; Dawson 2008). Likewise, not only has skepticism about significant Neolithic settlement in the Aegean islands been shown to be unfounded (Broodbank 2000: 117–41), but there now also exists a number of instances, well documented by excavation and radiocarbon dating, of Mesolithic island occupations in this area (Galanidou 2011: fig. 1).

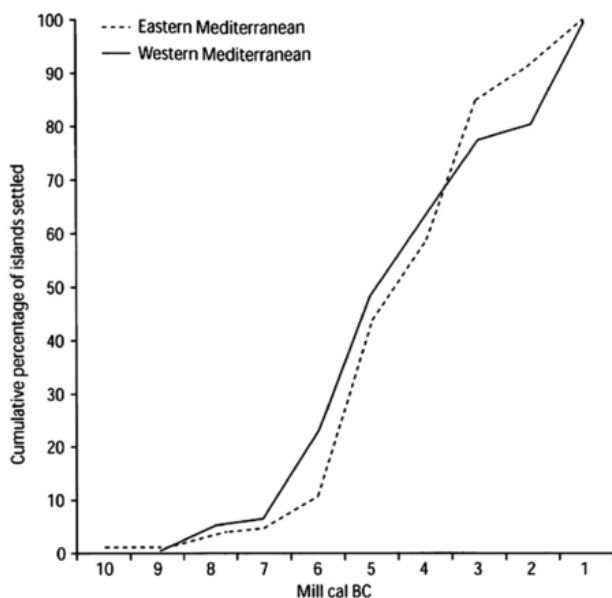
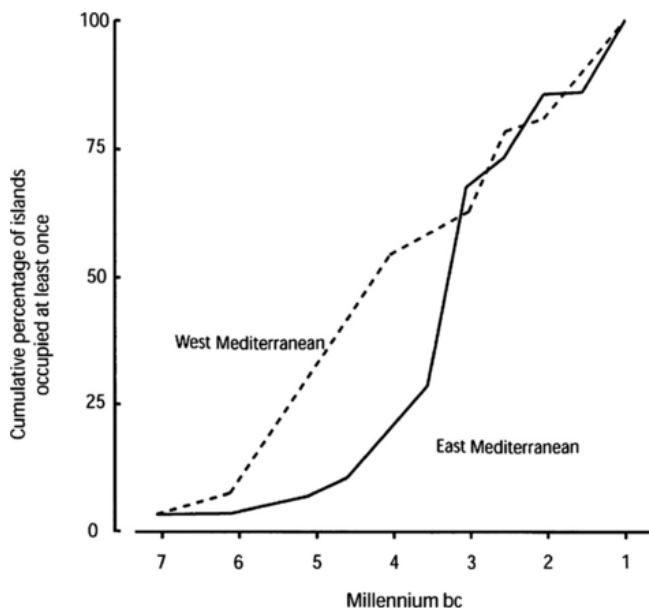


Figure 1.3. Plots of the cumulative percentage of east and west Mediterranean islands settled, by millennium: (a) based on data as they existed before 1980, and (b) based on data up to 2005 (Cherry 1981: fig. 5; Dawson 2008: fig. 7.4).

One immediate, and positive, consequence of the paper by Cherry (1981), and several subsequent papers by the same author, was to draw the Mediterranean into conversation, on an equal footing, with discussions about comparative colonization processes in other island theaters (e.g., most prominently, Keegan and Diamond 1987). Another was the development of more nuanced applications of biogeographical approaches, informed by better understandings of island palaeogeography (e.g., Held 1989a; 1989b; 1993). Colonization of particular islands may be affected, for example, by the existence of ‘stepping-stone’ islands, or geographic configurations conducive to serving as seagoing ‘nurseries.’ The very term ‘colonization’ is too simplistic, and requires tricky distinctions to be made between seasonal visits, resource exploitation, first colonization, permanent settlement, and even later abandonment (Cherry 1981: 48–49; Vigne 1989: 41; Dawson 2008). The theory of island biogeography (MacArthur and Wilson 1967) rightly emphasized the predictive importance of ‘area effects’ and ‘distance effects,’ but in a cultural setting these are factors that need considerable modification and elaboration. Thus, distance refers to the widest water barrier between an island and its nearest landfall. That may have varied throughout the last deglaciation, and the relative difficulty of making a crossing depends on winds and currents, as well as the knowledge, skill, and the endurance of seafarers. Knowledge of a distant island may depend on sensory clues (clouds, seabirds, smells), but also on its ‘target area,’ i.e. the angle it subtends on the horizon when viewed from the staging area (Keegan and Diamond 1987; see Figure 1.4 for an illustration from the southern Aegean). Held’s work in the 1980s (1989a; 1989b: 78–104) utilized the concept of a simple ‘target/distance’ (T/D) ratio as an approximate measure of the difficulty (or probability) of reaching an island, and from it flowed many useful insights both within the Mediterranean and beyond. It underscored the relative isolation (in T/D terms) of Cyprus and some of the Balearics (thus revealing the precociously early occupation of the former, and helping explain the late settlement of the latter), and demonstrated that, worldwide,

all islands with known Pleistocene occupation have high T/D scores.

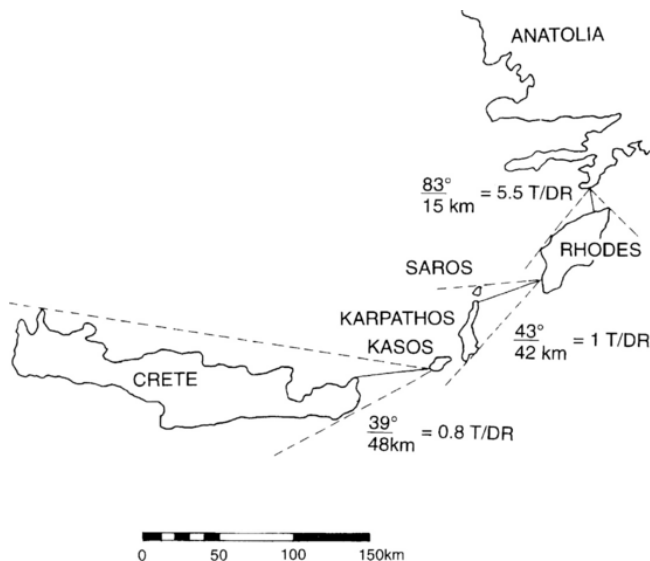


Figure 1.4. Illustration of the ‘target/distance ratio’ in the case of the configuration of islands in the southern Aegean, seen from the perspective of the southern tip of the Knidos peninsula (Turkey) as an embarkation point. Crete, which presents a target of 39 degrees, divided by its distance from the next neighbouring island, has a lower probability of contact (expressed as a target/distance ratio) than, for example, Rhodes (when winds and currents are taken into account) (Patton 1996: fig. 3.5).

Another important development during this period of research on Mediterranean island prehistory was an enhanced understanding, based on numerous excavations at early sites, of the chronological sequence of Holocene animal extinctions and introductions. Because the late Pleistocene fauna of many Mediterranean islands is well studied, it has become increasingly possible to evaluate people’s far-reaching impact on island ecosystems, particularly in contexts of overlap between humans, endemic fauna, and humanly introduced species. On Corsica, for instance, the entire mammalian fauna derives from human introductions over the past nine millennia, and all

Pleistocene animals have become extinct, directly or indirectly through human action. Yet, in the case of smaller species, there was also a seven-millennium-long period of co-existence (see summary in Cherry 1990: 194–97, fig. 9). While humans seem to be the major catalyst for animal extinctions on Mediterranean islands, it is often unclear whether this occurred as a result of overkill, the introduction of new species, or human modifications of the natural environment. Understanding the overlap (if any) of humans and island pygmy faunas, and the possible role of the former in exterminating the latter, have been major, still unresolved, areas of contention in the case of the Late Epipalaeolithic on Cyprus at the *Aetokremnos* site (Simmons 1999; Knapp 2010), and of human–*Myotragus* relationships in the Balearics (Ramis *et al.* 2002).

Most of the research in this period, summarized above – and much other work not specifically cited here (for references, consult the exhaustive bibliographies in Cherry [1990] and Broodbank [2000]) – was conducted in terms characteristic of its time: a generally processual outlook; a strong emphasis on model testing, quantification, and generalization; and considerable weight placed on ecological and environmental factors. The methods and achievements of this phase of work on island prehistory was usefully synthesized, for the whole Mediterranean, in Patton’s book *Islands in Time* (1996). While it is an unreliable source with many errors, and is itself now seriously out-of-date, it nonetheless served as a pointer to the styles of research that were soon to become dominant – as intimated by its subtitle *Island Sociogeography and Mediterranean Prehistory*. Where were prehistoric people, communities, and social processes on islands? Biogeography, islands as laboratories, modeling initial colonization, studying faunal extinctions, and so on were certainly fascinating and productive avenues of research, but they left a very great deal of the lives and identities of prehistoric Mediterranean islanders unexplored and unexplained.

Mediterranean Island Prehistory into

the Twenty-First Century

The biogeographic paradigm and approaches derived from it (e.g., Held 1993) largely continued to dominate Mediterranean island archaeology until the late 1990s, due in part to their apparent success in accounting for broad patterns seen in the initial colonization of the basin (Cherry 1990). Yet this continued focus on the earliest stages of island prehistory came at the expense of a lack of attention to many aspects of subsequent insular dynamics (Patton 1996; Broodbank 1999: 237) – human impacts on island ecosystems, differing trajectories of sociocultural and political development, the significance of networks of inter-island and island–mainland interactions, and the emergence of distinctive island identities and materialities. There was also a continued interest in the esoteric and the introverted in island contexts (e.g., Stoddart *et al.* 1993; Malone and Stoddart 2004; Kolb 2005), despite reminders that this is not an exclusive outcome of island living (Rainbird 1999: 227).

The development of the discipline within the Mediterranean, as a result, became increasingly divergent from that within other theaters. Particularly notable was a growing call in the Pacific for the recognition of continued interconnectivity in post-colonization phases as the cause of large-scale homogenous phenomena such as the Lapita complex (Kirch 1988). Strong challenges were mounted against the bounded nature of the prehistoric island and limitations in environmental diversity as a condition of island life. Evidence was presented to indicate the reticulate nature of prehistoric (primarily Melanesian) societies, in contrast to the prevailing dendritic model of insular cultural development throughout the wider Pacific (Gosden and Pavlides 1994; Hunt and Fitzhugh 1997; Terrell *et al.* 1997). Mediterranean-based studies remained, by comparison, relatively unconnected to the larger world of prehistoric island archaeology.

Major advances came from the work of Cyprian Broodbank (1993; 2000) and Paul Rainbird (1999; 2007: 26–45), both –

significantly – drawing inspiration from sources *outside* circum-Mediterranean archaeology. Although approaching the topic from starkly different perspectives and dealing with very diverse bodies of material, the work of these scholars in conjunction nonetheless challenged the basic assumptions of the then-dominant paradigm in Mediterranean island archaeology. In particular (and echoing the central theme of debates in the Pacific), both suggested that insularity, as a condition obtaining upon island societies, was best understood as constituted contingently as well as necessarily – that is, prehistoric island isolation might be an outcome of the operation of cultural systems, rather than a premise of this operation.

Rainbird (1999; 2007) both developed a critique of island archaeology as informed by biogeographic principles and also provided an alternative that sought to de-center the island as the focus of study. For him, the category itself was misplaced, an aspect of a largely literary western meta-narrative that has sought to constitute the insular as an object to the non-insular subject (Rainbird 1999: 217–25; 2007: 4–11, 26–39; cf. Baldacchino 2008), thereby empowering the colonizing ‘Cartesian’ westerner. Island archaeology in general, and Mediterranean island prehistory in particular, by utilizing biogeographic principles and seeking generalizations, had failed to provide meaningful information about the nature of human colonization and occupation of individual islands (Rainbird 2007: 36; cf. Broodbank 2006: 218–19). Rather than understanding islands as entities bounded as a consequence of their environmental properties, Rainbird conceived of the sea as the great connector, uniting dispersed and depauperate island communities via a uniform medium, thereby facilitating movement and rendering ‘the island’ meaningless as a discrete unit of analysis. The sea was something traversed by prehistoric peoples, whose very travels helped constitute it as a liquid plain, just as knowable as the land. Using a phenomenological framework akin to that of Tilley (1994), Rainbird constructed a manifesto for a landscape archaeology of what he called the *seascape*, a term intended to draw attention away from islands and toward the

experiential aspects of prehistoric maritime lifeways (1999: 229–32; 2007: 45; cf. Boomert and Bright 2007). Broodbank (2000: 34), at just this time, was also stressing the need for an archaeology of the sea to match that of the land.

Rainbird's general approach, however, has not garnered many adherents (see the commentaries in the *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 12 [1999] 235–60). Certainly, the introduction of agency, by emphasizing the behavior and perceptions of people on islands, rather than islands themselves, is a welcome development; and yet a proposed archaeology that shifts its focus away from the material and environment (as Rainbird 2007: 45) seems oddly counterintuitive. His central point, however, is well taken, and recalls the strengths of the diffusionist conception of the Mediterranean as a briny continental highway: it is undeniable, in cases ranging from the Lapita expansion, to the spread of the Neolithic into and across the Mediterranean, to the broad distributions of the obsidian of Monte Arci on Sardinia or of Melos, that some prehistoric societies were comfortable with and demonstrably capable of traversing significant distances by sea. Moreover, while Tarxien Temple-phase Malta may seem isolated, Ghar Dalam Malta, or Tarxien Cemetery-phase Malta, do not (Stoddart *et al.* 1993; Stoddart 1999; Robb 2001); and since the geometric properties of the island did not change over the centuries, variables other than distance, size, and visibility must have been implicated in the apparent waxing and waning of relative insularity. Geographic isolation, then, at least in the Maltese example, may well have been a necessary condition for the development of esoteric insular cultural dynamics of the sort identified by John Evans – but it was not a sufficient condition. In other words, cultural isolation and esoteric efflorescence, when it occurs, may in part be functions of contingent social processes. Evans's (1973) notion of islands as laboratories for the study of culture change may have been ill-founded, yet certain islands as a result of specific historical processes have chosen, as it were, to *become* laboratories.

The work of Cyprian Broodbank (1989; 1993; 2000) to

some extent anticipated elements of Rainbird's critique of island archaeology, and it has certainly opened up a range of innovative ways of interrogating and thinking about the available data. His main object of study, like Renfrew's (1972), was the Early Bronze Age Cyclades. This regional rather than insular focus, perhaps more readily defensible than elsewhere in the Mediterranean, militated against any approach seeking to deal with each island in isolation. As Broodbank noted (2000: 175–210), from colonization until the second millennium BC the archipelago seems to have functioned as a relatively coherent cultural unit, with many elements of material culture and other aspects of island life shared from Andros to Amorgos, even if a self-aware sense of 'Cycladic' identity was not to emerge until very much later. The group demands to be treated as a whole, because insularity, whether cultural or environmental, was highly dependent on context and degree of incorporation within various shifting intra-Cycladic networks. These islands were neither self-sufficient isolates (which, despite Rainbird's [1999: 288] characterization, was never the position adopted by biogeographical island archaeology), but nor were they locked in world-systemic integration. Depending on the temporal and geographic scale in question, an individual island or island group might have been more or less connected according to the time of year, the productivity of the harvest, the need for a bride for a grown son, the strength of the *meltemi*, the size of the annual tunny shoals, or the proximity of the next island.

The key recognition is that a range of variables contributes to how insular or how connected a given community is able to render itself (Broodbank 2000: 92–96, 175–210; 2008; Fitzpatrick *et al.* 2007; Fitzpatrick and Anderson 2008). Islanders exercise their agency within a highly circumscribed environment, yet the boundary and degree of that circumscription fluctuate at a series of temporal scales, presenting and foreclosing on novel capacities and environments in a manner that is infrequently experienced by mainlanders. Broodbank (2000: 21–26) captured the mutability of the parameters and horizons of island life, as well as its liminality, with the notion of *islandscape*. Defining

the various spheres of insular living for a particular community, the islandscape also consequently serves as an appropriate unit of analysis. It has the particular advantage of recognizing the local and specific nature of island experience without abandoning the changing, yet highly circumscribing, conditions of island living, thereby negotiating an epistemological path between island-as-laboratory and the phenomenological seascape.

This understanding of the island world as mutable and semi-permeable resonates with Robb's (2001) conception of the insularity of Malta in the fourth and third millennia BC. For Robb too, cultural process and geometric reality combine to create conditions in which connectivity, or lack of it, satisfies cultural needs both despite and because of environmental factors. Robb also makes the important point that just as insularity or connectivity as conditions are not absolute, neither are their social and material outcomes. Malta in the fourth and early third millennia BC was isolated, to be sure, but only relative to its participation in wider central Mediterranean networks in the preceding and succeeding centuries. Mediterranean isolation is only such, then, when viewed through a local lens. Little in the way of Mediterranean insular experience is comparable to the exceptionally remote example of Rapa Nui or even Hawaii; conversely, Ibiza and Formentera in the Balearic islands appear to have been settled many millennia after Cyprus (Gómez Bellard 1995), far longer than it took Pacific islanders to journey from island southeast Asia to New Zealand and Rapa Nui. This illustrates nothing save to reinforce that local processes and perceptions are inherently relative.

A further major contribution of Broodbank's work was to move beyond speculation about relative connectivity and to explore the social and material consequences of insular distance and its crossing. The former was achieved in part by drawing on graph theoretical techniques, as earlier applied in the Pacific, to develop a subtle application of Proximal Point Analysis for simulating patterns of growth in interaction and connectivity among Cycladic communities,

as a consequence of colonization, increase in settlement, and intensification of seafaring (Broodbank 2000: 180–210) (Figure 1.5). An important insight was his suggestion that the calorific and labor investment necessary to paddle the ‘canoes’ depicted in Keros-Syros art (Broodbank 1989) within and beyond the archipelago was enough to make any non-local journey a significant social undertaking, being an inherently high-risk (albeit presumably also high-return) strategy (Broodbank 1993; 2000: 276–319). As a consequence, he proposed that the capacity to traverse open water, visit exotic shores, and successfully return home having bartered or traded for goods might generate social capital. In this understanding, accretion of capital by such means was implicated in the emergence of a ‘voyaging ethos’ in the third-millennium BC Aegean, in which successful navigation and its associated behaviors was a dominant feature in intra-communal social relations (as, for instance, in the ethnographically attested Melanesian exchange systems). This in turn partly helps to account for the apparent prominence of ‘sea-going nurseries’ and ‘voyaging centers’ in the third-millennium Aegean (Broodbank 2000: 212–21), and the widespread circulation of pottery, lithics, and other goods within and beyond the archipelago. Indeed, prehistoric seafaring and voyaging have attracted increased attention in recent years, both in the Mediterranean (Broodbank 2006; Knapp 2010) and globally (Anderson *et al.* 2010).

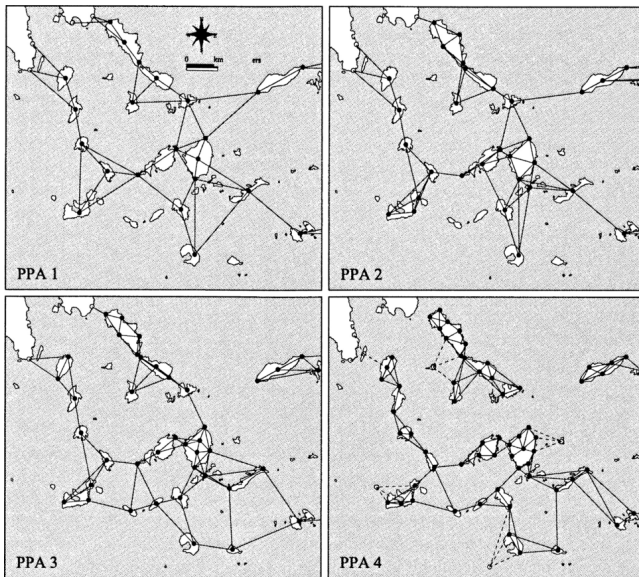


Figure 1.5. A sequence of Proximal Point Analyses simulating patterns of local interaction in the Cyclades under conditions of demographic growth in the Early Bronze Age (Broodbank 2000: fig. 53).

Broodbank's book (2000) deservedly won prizes, and it has served as a powerful catalyst for pushing Mediterranean island prehistory, and even global island archaeology, in fruitful new directions entering the twenty-first century. A rich set of research questions were laid out for consideration, many yet to be fully explored. For instance, it may be necessary to reconsider how insularity is manifested at the level of the community: if some members were more 'connected' (via status, access to seacraft, absence of sailing taboo, etc.) while others were more 'isolated,' this forces a reconsideration of blanket definitions of insularity. Parallels between patterns of resource acquisition and consumption, and indices of increased or decreased insularity, might contribute to this discussion. As another example, more research on the social dimension of voyaging, beyond the context of the Early Bronze Age Aegean discussed by Broodbank, may well be illuminating. This is particularly so in cases in which it is reasonable to think that maritime

activity was not a casual, routine activity without social connotations – for instance, in the spread of the maritime Neolithic from Thessaly to points west during the sixth and fifth millennia BC (Zeder 2008; Zilhão 2001).

Whither Mediterranean Island Prehistory?

With the collapse of faith in the biogeographic notion of islands as bounded, naturally defined areas for investigation, and the move beyond a somewhat myopic focus on patterns and processes of colonization, Mediterranean island prehistory has both matured and diversified in the face of an increasingly rich data set and a willingness to adopt new approaches. It can reasonably be claimed that, in being exposed to the discussions surrounding insularity versus connectivity, it has been drawn into the wider field of global island prehistoric archaeology and anthropology, especially concerning the methodological debates ongoing in the Pacific and Caribbean; this exposure, moreover, has had effects outside the purely anglophone academy (e.g., Gili *et al.* 2006).

Some trends are very promising. Mediterranean island prehistory, a latecomer to comparative and theoretically informed discussions of insularity, finally has a seat at the table. It is now included in global overviews of island archaeology and seafaring (e.g., Cherry 2004; Anderson *et al.* 2010). Mediterranean prehistorians have themselves organized conferences and edited books that concern comparative island archaeologies on a global scale (e.g., Waldren and Ensenyat 2002; Conolly and Campbell 2008), and in one instance have even shifted the focus of their current field endeavors to the Caribbean (Cherry *et al.* 2012). At the same time, it must be recognized that, if comparisons between island contexts within the same basin need careful explication, merely superficial comparisons between far-flung island theaters may turn out to be only moderately illuminating. What do the Balearics or the Cyclades have to do with Micronesia or the Aleutians?

Context-specific dynamics should not be forgotten in the rush to compare and contrast, lest the outcome merely reproduce inherent differences.

Nevertheless, there is a new willingness to engage with processes whose study might benefit from careful comparison. The work of Helen Dawson (2006; 2008; 2010; 2014) exploring the complexities of Mediterranean island colonization – a line of research that some had imagined was past its use-by date – in the light of increasingly rich chronometric data and methods applied to other colonization episodes, is a particularly good example. Scholars of island cultures in areas otherwise mired in local empiricism have begun to appreciate the benefits of wider horizons (e.g., Berg 2010; Copat *et al.* 2010). In a different direction, network-based techniques that aim to map and quantify connectivities, and the wider effects of their outcomes, represent another research initiative in which prehistoric Mediterranean island archaeology has much material and many insights to contribute (e.g., Knappett *et al.* 2008; Knappett 2011).

A striking feature of Mediterranean island prehistory early in the second decade of the twenty-first century is the sheer quantity of information now available. Chance finds, rescue digs, research excavations, and regional projects have generated new data almost everywhere. A major factor has been the large number of landscape survey projects undertaken since the 1980s that have now reached publication. Gkiasta's recent book *The Historiography of Landscape Research on Crete* (2008), for example, labors to synthesize results from more than 30 projects on a single island; inevitably, it encountered the difficulty of distinguishing between disparate regional sequences and incongruities among data sets collected with different methodologies (Alcock and Cherry 2004). The major research effort required to synthesize the earliest prehistory of 115 Mediterranean islands (Cherry 1981) was rendered out-of-date in a number of important essentials within a decade (Cherry 1990) and, for the Aegean, at least, required a further major overhaul by the time of Broodbank's study

(2000). Large-scale comparison – the very stuff of island archaeology – has become more, not less, difficult. At the same time, the torrent of fresh discoveries has encouraged the writing of authoritative new interpretative syntheses of the prehistories of individual islands, whether traditionally culture-historical in outlook (e.g., Leighton 1999, for Sicily), or informed by theoretical perspectives unimaginable a generation ago (e.g., Knapp 2013, for Cyprus; Skeates 2010, for Malta).

This chapter has not aimed to summarize any empirical facts about Mediterranean island prehistories, but rather to highlight trends in the development of distinctive approaches to the comparative study of islands within this basin. Nonetheless, it may be appropriate to conclude with a few examples of the extent to which new facts confront what we thought we knew, forcing constant revision of our models. On Cyprus, where until relatively recently the earliest evidence was that of the aceramic Neolithic Khirokitia Culture, new excavations and surveys, informed by high-resolution radiocarbon dating, have pushed back the prehistory of the island by several millennia and necessitated a wholesale re-evaluation of interactions among Late Epipalaeolithic and Early Aceramic Neolithic seafarers, foragers, and agriculturalists (see Knapp 2010; 2013: 48–119 for a recent summary). Cretan prehistory has been shaken up by the report of numerous Mesolithic sites in the Plakias area of the south coast (themselves several millennia earlier than the hitherto accepted earliest evidence from aceramic Neolithic Stratum X at Knossos), but also by the claims – not yet fully supported or widely accepted – of Lower Palaeolithic tools, between 130,000 and 700,000 years old, in the same area (Strasser *et al.* 2010; 2011). In the Cyclades, excavations at Kavos on the island of Keros have brought to light a massive deposit of fragmentary marble vessels and figurines, many of the latter evidently deliberately broken prior to their transport to the island for deposition, implying the existence of some kind of unique Cycladic-wide ‘sanctuary’ or ritual center (Renfrew *et al.* 2009). Lastly, to cite a negative example, earlier assessments of the antiquity of settlement in the Balearics have been

shown to be overoptimistic, with a colonization stage now no earlier than the late third millennium BC, and full habitation with an indigenous culture only in the mid-second millennium Cal BC (Ramis *et al.* 2002; Ramis 2010: 75–76; see also Ramis, [Chapter 3](#)).

Essential to the development of maturity within Mediterranean island prehistory has been the recognition that many causal factors must be combined, in order to account for the development of island lifeways. Broadly environmental factors are coming to be recognized as just as significant as the social and symbolic aspects of insularity. Recent years have recognized the need to view the terminal Pleistocene and early Holocene Mediterranean as relatively dynamic with regard to both climate and sea level. Thus, Broodbank, in exploring the development of initial Mediterranean seafaring activity, highlights how changing ecological parameters alter human perceptions of productive and unproductive landscapes, thereby potentially transforming islands from inhospitable to relatively welcoming environments over the course of just a few centuries (Broodbank 2006: 208–11; 2008: 75). This integration of cultural and environmental factors offers a convincing account of the initial causation of Mediterranean colonization, and suggests that the motivation and stimuli (rather than simply the capacity) to establish and maintain island communities must be addressed in regional research. This also necessitates accepting that demographic growth exerts very real pressures, especially in liminal and insular societies (Shennan 2009). A correlation between demographic growth, preference for certain soils and ecological niches, and the speed and rate of colonization may illuminate aspects of the spread of island and coastal lifeways through the early Holocene Mediterranean.

Finally, the creation of meaningful landscapes in pristine or semi-pristine colonized environments is a promising avenue of research. Knapp (2008) has attempted to reconcile debates surrounding Cypriot Bronze Age insularity with a sophisticated discussion of ethnicity and identity. In moving toward an island archaeology that balances social concerns

with the environmental constraints of insular life, the construction of island identities, their retention, and indeed their abandonment (Dawson 2008; 2014) will feature large in understanding why and how islanders made the material and cultural choices they did. In this respect, the book *Material Connections in the Ancient Mediterranean: Mobility, Materiality and Identity* (van Dommelen and Knapp 2010), with its focus on the intersection of movement, insularity, and senses of self and place, can be taken as epitomizing the current state of theory in Mediterranean island archaeology at the end of the first decade of the third millennium.

What trends are now emerging in its second decade? Two recent publications illustrate the degree to which diversity now characterizes Mediterranean island prehistory. The micro-focus of Bevan and Conolly's (2013) innovative survey of tiny Antikythera reveals the minutiae of diachronic island life, while also hinting at patterning in the struggle to eke out a living on islands out of the stream. At the other end of the spectrum, the grand sweep of Broodbank's (2013) vision of Mediterranean prehistory contextualizes islanders as inhabitants of an interlinked Middle Sea that is far greater than the sum of its parts. The common ground is the recognition that ebbs and flows have equally bound islands to, and severed them from, wider social worlds, and that these processes of engagement and withdrawal are at least in part rooted in ecodynamics operating at various scales. New studies located between these two poles continue to emerge, giving the lie to the demise of island archaeology (as Rainbird 1999 suggested); a renewed interest in human arrival at, subsistence on, and abandonment of islands is noteworthy (e.g., Phoca-Cosmetatou 2011; Dawson 2014; Simmons 2014). Mediterranean island prehistory is, in the final analysis, in rude health: a new generation of island prehistorians, bringing to bear new approaches to old (and new) data and revitalizing questions first posed in the 1970s, promises to keep it so.

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2 Inside Out? Materiality and Connectivity in the Aegean Archipelago

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Abstract

The Mediterranean is mostly made up of continental littoral and large islands; archipelagos are restricted to the Balearics, the northeast Adriatic and the Aegean. Nonetheless, the island archaeology that has featured so much in Mediterranean studies generally flourished in the study of archipelagos, stimulated by comparable work in Oceania. We propose in this chapter to continue this tradition with a focus on the Cyclades. However, we offer three twists that, taken together, open up new perspectives. First, we consider the status of the Cyclades as an archipelago in relation to its nearby continental littorals of the Greek and Anatolian mainlands, and the ‘miniature continent’ of Crete. Second, we adopt a diachronic approach that seeks to chart the changing patterns of connectivity between the Cyclades and these areas throughout the course of the Bronze Age. Third, we place particular emphasis on the role played by materialities in creating and changing the space of the archipelago. Whether raw materials or finished products, artefacts or artworks, these materialities are indivisibly social and material; they serve as the key to understanding the changing faces of the archipelago over time.

Introduction: Continents First?

Europe in the Neolithic; *The Making of Bronze Age Eurasia*; *The Archaeology of Mainland Southeast Asia*; *African Archaeology* – these are some of the titles in the Cambridge University Press World Archaeology series. What this tells us is that regional archaeologies are typically organised by continent. Admittedly, there are exceptions within this series, such as *The Archaeology of the Caribbean*, and *The Archaeology of Micronesia*, focussing on island archipelagos. Yet, on the whole, the continents, bordered by oceans and seas, are our main units of analysis. The Mediterranean, of course, is different: ‘the sea in the middle of the land, as distinct from the lands in the middle of the sea’ (Horden and Purcell 2006: 735). This creates an inversion, such that the sea is interior, and the continents exterior – what Horden and Purcell (2000: 133) describe as the ‘inside-out geography’ of the Mediterranean. If the Mediterranean does have validity as a historical unit, as seems to be amply displayed by this volume and others that have preceded it (e.g. Broodbank 2013), then it follows that we should be prepared to place the sea at its centre. This means thinking of seascapes as absolutely critical to the historical and social changes we observe over a range of temporal and spatial scales.

Of course, this ‘interior’ is not just sea, inhabited by boat-dwellers in the manner of Kevin Costner’s *Waterworld*. It is dotted with islands, large and small, closely clustered and widely flung. No doubt this is why Horden and Purcell (2000: 134) dub the Mediterranean an ‘extended archipelago’, at least for the beginnings of the historical period (see also Braudel 1995). While such an assertion may hold water for the Iron Age, it is a leaky proposition for the Bronze Age, when we see little evidence for interaction spanning the entire Mediterranean. Although towards the end of the Bronze Age the line in chalk separating the Mediterranean into east and west is smudged, given the evidence of Mycenaean interaction with southern Italy (Blake 2008), for much of the period, interactions remain very largely east Mediterranean – and even at this reduced scale, it is often hard to discern solid evidence for interaction beyond more restricted regions. For much of the Early, Middle and Late Bronze Ages, until the Late Helladic

(‘Mycenaean’) period (ca. 1490–1050 BC; see LH IIA–IIIC in [Table 2.1](#)), the principal scale of inter-regional interaction for sites in the Aegean appears to be *Aegean*, not east Mediterranean; that is to say, neither the extended archipelago of the entire Mediterranean, nor a half-cocked extended archipelago of the east, but the archipelago that is the Aegean (see [Figure 2.1](#)).

Table 2.1. Chronological table: Crete, Cyclades, Greece

Absolute chronology	Crete	Cyclades	Mainland	
3000	Prepalatial	EM I	Grotta-Pelos	EH I
2650 BC				
2650		EM IIA	Keros	EH II
2450 BC			Syros	
2450		EM IIB	Kastri	
2200 BC				
2200			EM III	Phylakopi I
2050 BC	First Palace Period			
2050		MM IA	Early MC	MH I
1950 BC				
1950		MM IB	MH II	
1900 BC				
1900–1800 BC		MM II		
1800			MM IIIA	Late MC
1750 BC	Second Palace Period			
1750		MM IIIB		
1675 BC				
1675–1620 BC		LM IA	LC I	LH I
1580			LM IB	LH IIA
1490 BC				
1490			LM II	LC II
1430 BC	Final Palatial			
1430		LM IIIA1	LC IIIA	LH IIIA1
1370 BC				

1370–		LM IIIA2	LH IIIA2	
1320 BC				
1320	Postpalatial	LM IIIB	LC IIIB	LH IIIB
1200 BC				
1200	LM IIIC	LC IIIC	LH IIIC	
1050 BC				



Figure 2.1. Map of the Aegean, with main sites mentioned in text. After NASA Visible Earth; Jacques Descloitres, MODIS Rapid Response Team, NASA/GSFC. Prepared by C. Knappett.

As the notion of the extended archipelago derives from this ‘archetypal’ (Aegean) archipelago, then we are still obliged to make the sea central, or rather, the island-studded sea. With this archipelago having the same inside-out geography of the Mediterranean, albeit writ small, we should presumably treat the continents as peripheral. But this is a far cry from how the archaeology of the Bronze Age Aegean has been written. The continents still dominate our thinking (but see Broodbank 2013). Examples of this come from all periods of the Bronze Age. In the late Early Bronze

Age (EBA), the seascapes and islandscapes at the heart of the archipelago see influence from the Anatolian mainland. In the Middle Bronze (MBA) and early Late Bronze Age (LBA), there is a swing to the south, and it is Crete that appears to hold sway. Then in the later LBA, the centre of gravity shifts to the Greek mainland. It is as if different ‘continents’ (Crete in many ways has more the character of a continental landmass than an island – dubbed a ‘miniature continent’ by Rackham and Moody 1996: xi) take their turn to dictate terms. Continents first. This hardly looks like the ‘inside-out geography’ that has been taken to heart by Aegean prehistorians.

Peraia

It seems that current scholarship may have forgotten a few ancient lessons. There is an intriguing concept from Classical antiquity that does put islands first. The ancient Greek geographical term *peraia* (περαία) describes the territory beyond the limits of a certain area, usually separated by water (see Lambrinoudakis 1997: 666–67 for references to Classical literary sources; also Constantakopoulou 2007). In relation to an island, the term denotes the mainland opposite it and specifically the area belonging to the territory of the island state. In historical times, almost all the island centres of the north and northeast Aegean as well as the Dodecanese held a territory on the opposite coast, in these cases Macedonia and Asia Minor respectively (Lambrinoudakis 1997 on the islands of the north and northeast Aegean; Fraser and Bean 1954 on the important Rhodian *peraia*). While the political and administrative centre of these state formations lay in the island towns, the economic importance of the *peraia* territory was of major significance for the subsistence of the state, and was vigorously defended. The close relationship that existed between the islands and the mainland areas they occupied resulted in a continuous exchange, not least in the cultural sphere, with island towns tending to develop a mixed island and mainland character. Lambrinoudakis (1997) argues that it is this element of *peraia* that distinguishes the character of

the island towns opposite mainland areas from the purely insular towns of the central Aegean, as the former are more closely bound, both economically and culturally, to the fortunes of the mainland.

While this example from historical times ought not to be used crudely to project interaction patterns onto the Bronze Age, it does highlight the preconceptions we bring to Aegean prehistory. Not only do we habitually privilege continents over islands, when we do think about island communities at all, we tend to treat them as comparable units of analysis, regardless of geographical location and size. The lack or presence of the *peraia* element could be a means of differentiating between islands within the Cyclades and hence refining our interpretations of inter-regional influence. For example, one might consider islands close to continental landmasses, such as Kea (see site of Ayia Irini, [Figure 2.1](#)), Aegina (site of Kolonna, [Figure 2.1](#)) and Kythera, all adjacent to the Greek mainland, and examine the possible effects of this proximity on their development as Bronze Age polities through the prism of the *peraia* formation. Embedded notions of continental primacy, however, undermine such intellectual exercises.

Challenging Continental Supremacy

How can we seriously suggest that this continental bias in Bronze Age scholarship be inverted? It is hard to refute the fact that continents simply have larger sites: in the early LBA, Crete has three sites covering more than 30 ha (Knossos, Phaistos and Malia, [Figure 2.1](#)), and the mainland two (Mycenae and Thebes), while no site in the islands reaches as much as 20 ha (Whitelaw 2001: 29). That said, we shouldn't underestimate island settlements, with Akrotiri on Thera ([Figure 2.1](#)) possibly as large as 30 ha (Doulas 2001), although some see this as on the high side, estimating instead 10 ha (Palyvou 2005: 27; note error of scale in her fig. 25, which should say 30 not 300 ha). Trianda on Rhodes ([Figure 2.1](#)) was perhaps around 15 ha (Whitelaw 2001: 29). We are not suggesting that small island communities are pulling the strings and determining the fate of these large

central sites, but neither can we accept that they are entirely secondary, in or out of the stream of influence according to the demands of larger continental neighbours. We need to ask a different question if we want different answers. What if we were to ask: could any of these continental ‘civilizations’ have developed at all were it not for the uniquely connective environment of the archipelago that lay among them? Does Anatolian influence really just sweep outwards to islandscapes from a continental core? Does Minoan political control simply ripple out across the southern Aegean archipelago? And does Mycenaean influence not owe a considerable debt to the islandscapes between mainland Greece, Crete and Anatolia?

We now tackle each of these questions in turn, concentrating here on the Cyclades, although the Dodecanese would make an interesting focus too. Our approach is a diachronic one, and in such a broad sweep covering a diverse island group, at times we lack resolution in our enquiry. A further crucial component of our approach is that we are firmly focussed on the material culture, and particularly pottery. Ideally, we would also be able to take into fuller account settlement patterns, architectural arrangements and other material culture forms such as metal and stone. Noting these provisos, we stress that we see material culture as constitutive in social dynamics, rather than merely reflective; and this is one of the reasons why the island groups in question do not see repeated interactions from one period to another, in a geographically deterministic manner. The islands change their ‘shape’ according to the socio-material technologies in play. One classic example of this is how the innovation of the sail ca. 2000 BC alters their configuration in terms of potential for interaction.

Early Bronze Age: From ‘International Spirit’ to ‘Anatolianising’ Network?

Although the EBA Cyclades have yielded individual finds of international renown, notably the famous marble figurines,

they have not been so forthcoming with respect to stratified settlement evidence. With large ceramic groups from settlements at Ayia Irini (Wilson 1999; 2013), Akrotiri (Kariotis *et al.* n.d.; Wilson 2013) and Skarkos (Marthari 2008), now published or nearly so, we are suddenly much better placed to understand regional interactions. Furthermore, this detailed work on local sequences has been matched by wider efforts to compare evidence from all over the EBA Aegean (see in particular the conferences organised at Urla and Athens – respectively, Erkanal *et al.* 2008; Doulas *et al.* n.d.). This has served to reinstate the geographical unity of continental and insular Aegean areas.

We begin our account at the outset of the EBA, in the early third millennium BC, when a dense network of maritime routes seems already to have existed. That said, stratified ceramic evidence is not yet sufficiently refined for the EB I period to allow us to say much more. The EB II Cyclades have long been a focus of scholarly interest, with distinctive patterns of connectivity encapsulated in Renfrew's (1972) term 'international spirit'. Since then, well-documented pottery deposits from non-funerary contexts at Phylakopi (Renfrew and Evans 2007), Ayia Irini (Wilson 1999; 2013), Akrotiri (Kariotis *et al.* n.d.; Wilson 2013) and Skarkos (Marthari 2008) provide the basis for an even fuller understanding of patterns of interaction within this period.

Two major phases have been distinguished, the early EB II or Keros-Syros Group, and the late EB II or Kastri Group, although groups of material from Akrotiri suggest a further refinement of the early EB II (Wilson 2013). Already in early EB II, a strong network of connections is formed among sites on Naxos, Ios, Melos, Thera, Kea, Keros, Amorgos and probably Syros and Siphnos, with distinct input from sites on the Greek mainland, as evidenced mainly by the exchange of pottery and marble artefacts. Broodbank (2000) further underlines the importance of interaction to the location of sites such as Dhaskalio Kavos on Keros (see also Renfrew *et al.* 2009) (Figure 2.1). This is perhaps a rare example of the archipelago not being characterised on the basis of its secondary role in relation to continental cultures. When it

comes to the latter part of the EB II period (Kastri Group), however, scholarship reverts to its continental bias. This phase sees the appearance of new elements in material culture, such as the *depas amphikypellon* (two-handled cup; see Figure 2.2), the neck or shoulder-handled tankard, the bell-shaped cup, the shallow bowl and the jug with a squared-off spout (Sotirakopoulou 1993; 1997; Angelopoulou 2008). These forms are distinctive of ceramic groups in western Anatolian sites, e.g. Küllüoba, Demircihöyük, Beycesultan, Aphrodisias, Karataş-Semayük and the coastal area of Asia Minor, e.g. Troy, Liman Tepe (Kouka and Şahoğlu n.d.) (Figure 2.1), Bakla Tepe (see Şahoğlu 2005; 2008; n.d.), as well as the northeast Aegean islands, Poliochni, Koukonisi and Myrina on Lemnos (Bernabò Brea 1976; Boulotis 1997), Emborio on Chios (Hood 1981) and Heraion on Samos (Milojčić 1961).



Figure 2.2. *depas amphikypellon*, from Akrotiri, Thera, Early Bronze II. Courtesy of Akrotiri Excavations.

Their sheer quantities in these areas in contexts dated to late EB II, many with predecessors in earlier phases (Doulas and Angelopoulou 1997), support the argument in favour of an Anatolian origin of these distinctive forms attested in late EB II Cyclades (Ayia Irini on Kea, Akrotiri on Thera, Panormos and Zas Cave on Naxos, Mt Kynthos on Delos,

Kastri on Syros, Dhaskalio Kavos on Keros, Markiani on Amorgos), Palamari on Skyros and some sites in east-central Greece, mainly on Euboea (Manika, Lefkandi), Attica (Raphina, Thorikos) and Thessaly (Pefkakia) (for a detailed overview, with references, see Doumas and Angelopoulou 1997; Wilson 1999: 97–101). Evidence is scarce from the Peloponnese (Rutter 2008: 465) and non-existent for the time being on Crete and in the Dodecanese. While interaction between Cretan sites and the rest of the Aegean in the EBA may still be regarded as limited, the absence of Kastri Group type fossils in the Dodecanese is certainly noteworthy, given the proximity of the islands to Asia Minor and the shared repertoire in pottery types until an advanced phase of the MBA. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that a phase equivalent to the Kastri Group is not yet clearly documented in the Dodecanese (Benzi 1997: 384; Marketou 1997; 2004).

But is this Anatolian influence really so directional, spreading from the continent and subsequently found in the archipelago? The origin of such influence on the ceramic production of the Cyclades is disputed, with suggested provenances the islands of the northeast Aegean, and Lemnos in particular, the northwest coast of Asia Minor and southwest Anatolia (Davis 1992: 754–55; Sotirakopoulou 1993; 2008; Doumas and Angelopoulou 1997; Wilson 1999; Rutter 2008: 467). This matter of provenance may not be of decisive significance, as the cultural changes appear to be found more or less simultaneously over the entire region (Şahoğlu 2005). Nevertheless it could fuel discussion on the directionality of metal trade routes, the nature of contacts between the Cycladic archipelago with specific sites or entire areas and its role in disseminating innovations in metallurgy and the widespread use of metals in the Aegean during the third millennium BC (Doumas 1988; Şahoğlu 2005 on the ‘Anatolian trade network’; Gale 2008). The decentred nature of this ‘Anatolianising’ network, perhaps emergent in a symbiosis between the northeast Aegean islands and the northwest coast of Asia Minor, might find some explanation in the idea of the *peraia* already mentioned (Lambrinoudakis 1997; Constantakopoulou

2007).

Notwithstanding provenance, the Kastri Group types appear in the Cycladic sites as local imitations of more or less generic prototypes, while it seems that the diagnostic typological set as attested in east-northeast island and coastal sites is not transferred in its entirety to the Cyclades, where some hybrids and variations are also produced (Angelopoulou 2008; see also Wilson 1999: 94–97) and probably circulated among the islands. The absence until now of any identified imports-prototypes in the Cyclades and the limited amount of Cycladic ceramic material moving to the east-northeast (Sotirakopoulou 2008; see also Wilson 1999) suggest a different mechanism of cultural influence from the ‘Minoanisation’ operating in the later part of the MBA and early LBA (discussed further below). It does not merit an equivalent term such as ‘Anatolianisation’, not least given the potential role of the northeast islands.

What term might we use instead? Although, the Greek term *koine* brings its own problems (Galanakis 2009), it is often used to describe a regional group of shared cultural attributes. The shared traits in pottery, metallurgy and possibly also some architectural aspects, such as the fortification of settlements, have led to use of the term ‘Aegeo-Anatolian cultural *koine*’ for the late EB II to early EB III period (Şahoğlu 2005). A closer look at the pottery reveals that Anatolian ceramic types stand out in limited numbers within local ceramic traditions, which continue uninterrupted in the islands from the Neolithic period onwards, and that the majority of imports in representative ceramic groups of late EB II at Akrotiri and Ayia Irini comes from the Cycladic islands. In fact, the number of imports attested for the Kastri Group phase testifies to the increased density and stability of the Cycladic/mainland Greece exchange network. A significant novelty that can be assigned to an ‘Aegeo-Anatolian cultural *koine*’ lies in the introduction and numerical increase of a variety of drinking and pouring vases, apparently a widespread phenomenon in the southern Aegean, including Crete, and the coast of Asia Minor (Rutter 2008; Wilson *et al.* 2008; Kariotis *et al.* n.d.; Şahoğlu n.d.).

Conduct and control of the metal trade in the Cyclades by distinct social groups may have instigated an early form of social stratification (cf. Şahoğlu 2005: 341–44, for similar social shifts in Anatolia). Social drinking and feasting, presumably but not necessarily at an elite group level, are a concomitant aspect of strengthening ties within a ‘shared cultural milieu’ and group inclusion/identity articulation practices. It is far from a coincidence that towards the end of the EBA, most of the settlements of Asia Minor, the insular Aegean and Crete underwent important social and political changes, giving birth to MBA polities or even state formations of distinct regional character.

To summarise our argument for the EBA, the evidence indicates a reverberation of Anatolian trends in the Cycladic islands for a short period, apparently a side effect of less tangible features, such as the transmission of metal technology and the circulation of rare metals, two areas in which Cycladic communities played an important part (cf. Wilson 1999). These trends were destined to fade after the disruptions that severed select trade routes towards the end of the EBA period. What we argue is that the Cycladic islands did not necessarily operate either as stepping stones for transmission of Anatolian traits or as ‘expatriate trading centres’ (Şahoğlu 2005: 346) for the purposes of elite groups based on the Anatolian continent. Rather, due to both their strategic position and their maritime involvement, they participated actively in the vibrant spread of metal technology and raw metals in the southern Aegean, apparently serving both routes, the one from Lavrion, Kythnos and Siphnos (Stos-Gale and Gale 1990: 74–77) and the other from the northeast islands (Gale 2008: 206–12). At the same time, the Cycladic archipelago inadvertently served as a buffer zone for the spread of Anatolian traits in the Peloponnese and Crete, whose maritime activity for this period is yet to be established. What we are seeing is a conscious choice of Cycladic communities to expand their already thriving interaction network towards the east and northeast, rather than a sweeping spread of continent-initiated cultural influence. Certainly different degrees of connectivity with other locales are at work for each island

(the obvious example being the relations of Kea with mainland Greece), but the overall pattern confirms an increased potential for interaction achieved by the Cycladic archipelago, anticipating its full expansion in the late MBA under the auspices of Minoan Crete.

Middle Bronze Age/Early Late Bronze Age ‘Minoanising’

Although there is some controversy over the transition from the EBA to MBA in the Cyclades, it is hard to deny that there are abandonments and discontinuities, with a new pattern of connectivity emergent in the MBA. Links between the islands and surrounding continental areas are not especially strong, according to the ceramic evidence (Nikolakopoulou 2007). Yet what links we do see appear to be with Crete, where the palatial centres of Knossos, Phaistos and Malia come to the fore in the early phases of the MBA. These sites are usually understood to have grown under their own steam, making the most of their rich agricultural resources and establishing efficient redistributive systems (e.g. Renfrew 1972; Halstead 1988). When inter-regional connectivity is given an explanatory role, it is invariably the Near East that is invoked, rather than the archipelago to the north (Manning 2008). Yet the actual material evidence for such eastern connections in Middle Minoan (MM) I is little stronger than evidence for links to the archipelago. While in terms of pottery we see Alternating Polychrome, an east Cretan MM IB style, in tiny quantities in Egypt, the amount of MM I pottery found outside Crete in the southern Aegean is no less: we find it at Akrotiri on Thera, at Phylakopi and Ayia Irini (Papagiannopoulou 1991; Knappett 2007; Nikolakopoulou 2009; Wilson 2013). Although some of the earliest Minoan imports were initially published as MM IIA at both Ayia Irini (Overbeck 1989; Papagiannopoulou 1991: 150) and at Phylakopi on Melos (Papagiannopoulou 1991: 84–85, discussing imported straight-sided cups), work since then has indicated that an assignation to MM IB is just as probable (Hood 2007: 248; Overbeck and Crego 2008: 307; Abell 2014), although at Phylakopi very small quantities of

MM IA are probably the earliest MM imports. Similarly, at Kolonna on Aegina the earliest MM pottery seems to be MM IA, with more material arriving subsequently in MM II (Hiller 1993; Gauss and Smetana 2007). Looking east, we also see MM I–II imports at Miletus in coastal Asia Minor (Raymond 2001), and perhaps also Trianda on Rhodes (Marketou 2009). As far as we can tell, this general pattern continues into MM IIA and B, judging from the evidence at Akrotiri at least (Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; Hilditch 2009).

Put this way, the evidence to place the archipelago at the centre of events, and not as an afterthought to developments on Crete, does not seem very compelling. There is simply not a great deal of pottery finding its way from Crete to other southern Aegean locations, and we do not have much other material evidence to go on. Yet metals were crucial to the success of Crete's elites, and they surely must have been exploiting resources in the Cyclades if not at Lavrion. The argument becomes much stronger, however, with the transition on Crete from the First to the Second Palace period, ca. 1700 BC (see Table 2.1). Following a series of site destructions in MM IIB, Knossos seems to emerge as the dominant centre on Crete during the MM IIIA period (Knappett 2011; Macdonald and Knappett 2013). It is precisely at this time that the evidence for connections across the southern Aegean increases dramatically. At Akrotiri on Thera, Cretan imports jump from just 1% of the overall assemblages to 10% (Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005). Furthermore, the range of imports increases, to include various drinking and pouring vessels, *amphorae*, *pithoi*, and even the occasional conical cup. The imports are very largely of identifiable Knossian types, such as the white-spotted ridged straight-sided cups (Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2008) (see Figure 2.3). As well as this influx of imports, local potters now for the first time also start to pay attention to Cretan styles and technologies. We see immediate imitations of both Cretan decorative styles, such as tortoiseshell ripple, and Cretan shapes, such as bridge-spouted jars (Figure 2.4). And in terms of technology, we find the first use of the potter's wheel, specifically for

recognisable Cretan types, notably the conical cup and ledge-rim bowl (Figure 2.5). It is only these plain, rather ‘crude’ shapes that are at first wheelmade; and although the wheel is increasingly used for more and more shapes, it is never fully adopted by local potters. Indeed, despite this definite and pronounced increase in connectivity in the Neopalatial period (see Table 2.1), we should not forget the continuing Cycladic character of most pottery produced at the site.

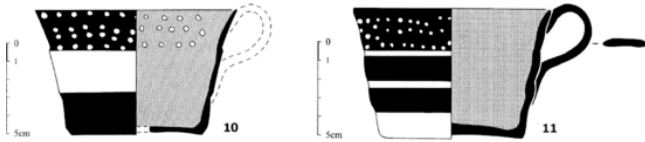


Figure 2.3. White-dotted straight-sided cups; imports from north-central Crete to Akrotiri, Thera. Middle Minoan IIIA. Courtesy of Akrotiri Excavations.



Figure 2.4. Local imitation (at Akrotiri, Thera) of both Cretan shape (bridge-spouted jar) and decoration (tortoiseshell ripple). Middle Minoan IIIA. Courtesy of Akrotiri Excavations.



Figure 2.5. Cretan-type ledge-rim bowl, locally made at Akrotiri, Thera. Middle Minoan IIIA. Courtesy of Akrotiri Excavations.

The picture from other Cycladic sites is not nearly as clear, but what there is seems to suggest a broadly similar pattern. At Phylakopi on Melos, there is also a shift, with Knossian-type imports conspicuous in MM IIB and IIIA (Hood 2007: 250). At Kea, this transition is seen in Period V, where we also see an apparent upsurge in Minoan imports (Davis 1986; Abell 2014). Although we need more detailed evidence from this crucial transition between MM II and III, what we do have points to a major shift in patterns of connectivity across the southern Aegean. This is surely not unrelated to the very profound changes occurring on Crete itself, whereby Knossos comes to power as a single dominant palatial centre. We do not need to go so far as to say that Knossos's power depended on the Cycladic centres such as Akrotiri, Phylakopi and Kea, yet they surely facilitated its growing regional status. Could the rise of Knossos have even happened without the Cycladic connection, and in particular that with Akrotiri?

The further consolidation of the Cyclades' role vis-à-vis Cretan palatial power is seen very conspicuously in the dramatic Late Cycladic (LC) I finds from Akrotiri, those that are so well known for the unfortunate reason of their burial beneath many metres of ash from the Minoan eruption of Thera (Doulas 1983; Friedrich 2000). The connections emergent in MM III are seen all the more vividly in Late Minoan (LM) IA, although the distinctive Cycladic character of the settlement is still very much apparent (Marthari 1993; Palyvou 2005). Crete/Knossos has certainly not taken over.

And it is in the wake of the eruption that the centrality of Cycladic communities is felt particularly acutely. Putting aside the arguments of the direct effects of the Thera eruption on Crete, in the form of ashfall and a possible tsunami, it is arguably the removal of the key trading node of Akrotiri that is more detrimental to Knossian power. This is not seen in any dramatic decline of trading networks, as Crete continues to obtain the exotic resources it demands, and the islands stay connected with surrounding areas. Rather, there is a subtle shift of orientation, such that many of these island communities already begin to ally themselves with the Greek mainland, if pottery distributions are a reasonable proxy. In particular, 'Marine Style', a new kind of very fine pottery in LM IB, would appear to be a largely Cretan style. Yet the examples found in the islands are imported not from Crete but from centres in Attica and/or the Argolid (Mountjoy and Ponting 2000; Mountjoy 2004; 2008). Such a trend has also been identified in the eastern Aegean, for example at Miletus (and on Rhodes, see Marketou *et al.* 2006). This situation anticipates the much more obvious influence of the Greek mainland in the following periods, to which we now turn.

Later Late Bronze Age 'Mycenaeanising'

In the later LBA, it again appears as if the Cyclades are playing second fiddle to a continental landmass, this time mainland Greece, and specifically the Peloponnese. As we have argued for previous periods, however, things are not entirely as they seem. Arguably the Mycenaean centres of the Peloponnese would not have developed as they did without Cycladic centres such as Phylakopi, Ayia Irini and Grotta (and one could extend this to the Dodecanese in the east). We examine this possibility below. But first we should pinpoint some of the differences between Mycenaeanisation and Minoanisation.

Minoanisation has an epicentre: Knossos. For Mycenaeanisation, however, we have no such equivalent. Furthermore, Mycenaeanisation rolls out across the Aegean even before we have strong evidence for palatial centres in

the Peloponnese, such as Mycenae, Tiryns and Pylos. This again differs from the Minoan situation. Thus, the homogenising use of the term 'Mycenaean' for the later stages of the Aegean LBA, referring both to chronological phasing and material culture traits, is even more misleading than 'Minoan', and has recently been contested as regional variation is given its due (Davis and Bennet 1999: 112–13). Dickinson (2006b: 115–16) argues that the term certainly cannot describe the material culture of the whole of the southern Aegean, since no single feature that could be considered typical of Mycenaean material culture – except the decorated pottery – is equally prevalent in every part of the Mycenaean region, and even this has a much wider range in some regions than others. Yet this period is characterised by a high degree of inter-regional connectivity, seen in the expansion of exchange across not only the east but also the central and west Mediterranean (Stampolidis 2003).

The level of refinement in chronological sub-phasing in Late Bronze III supersedes all preceding periods. Although it is mainly based on ceramic stylistic and typological sequences (Mountjoy 1986; 1999), there is much stratigraphic evidence from major mainland centres to substantiate the chronological scheme. For the Cyclades, and indeed also for the Dodecanese, the terminology used for the mainland is adopted, a practice that clearly reflects the strong links and interdependencies among these areas for the better part of the later LBA. A brief outline of the sequence of events and trends in the Cyclades, with some reference to the Dodecanese, is illustrative of the intriguing turns the relationship between the islands and mainland centres took.

After the 'anticipatory' mainland connection to the Cyclades in LM IB, the links develop much more fully following the widespread destructions on Crete at the end of LM IB. Phylakopi is destroyed at the end of LH IIA, and roughly at the same time so are Ayia Irini and Grotta (Cummer and Schofield 1984; Barber 1987: 224; Cosmopoulos 1998: 140). Although the LH IIB phase seems

to be represented only at Ayia Irini (Mountjoy 2008: 471), LH IIIA1 sees renewed activity not just at Ayia Irini (Cummer and Schofield 1984), but also at Grotta (Cosmopoulos 1998) and Phylakopi (Town IV), where a mansion with large megaron is constructed (Mountjoy 2008: 471). One might recall the point already made that some of these mainland links occur even before any palatial centres proper can be identified.

These sites continue to see activity in LH IIIA2, which is also the period when we see a significant increase in the number of Cycladic settlements, many inhabited for the first time (Cosmopoulos 1998: 144, endnote 22). Tholos tombs, a Mycenaean hallmark, are reported from the islands of Mykonos (LH IIIA2), Tenos (LH IIIB) and Naxos (Schallin 1993: 19, 22; Mountjoy 2008: 473). This is also the period with the strongest connections between mainland centres and the islands: Grotta, for example, has much imported mainland pottery (Cosmopoulos 1997; 1998: 140–41). These connections have given rise to the notion of a ‘Mycenaean *koine*’ in the LH IIIA period. As far as pottery trade is concerned, all the Cycladic island centres imported their fine decorated wares during this period, although this is only a small percentage of the corpus alongside the locally made domestic pottery (Mountjoy 2008).

Barber (1987: 225–26; cf. 1999a; 1999b) argues that the pronounced Mycenaeanisation of material culture represents the translation of the Mycenaean foothold in the Cyclades into a military and political takeover (*contra* Mountjoy 2008: 472–73), turning them into a prosperous Mycenaean province, located on Mycenaean contact routes with Crete, Anatolia and ultimately Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean – a situation that lasted until the middle of the thirteenth century BC (Karantzali 2001: 79). For the southeast Aegean islands, the advocates of the migration/colonisation hypothesis hold that a wave of new settlers from the mainland came in LH IIIA2 (review in Georgiadis 2003: 110–11; see also Karantzali 2001: 78). The evidence is not conclusive, however, for the actual presence of Mycenaean from the mainland. It seems much more likely

that the islands adopted Mycenaean practices, acting as centres peripheral to the core area of the northeast Peloponnese (Davis and Bennet 1999: 113–14). LH IIIA sees the rise of nucleation in settlement patterns in large islands, as suggested by evidence from Naxos and Rhodes (Cosmopoulos 1998: 141). Certainly, Grotta on Naxos and Ialysos on Rhodes must have played a key role as middlemen in exchange due to their strategic position in the southern Aegean, adopting mainland practices and artefacts through this interaction. Arguably these island centres emerged in tandem with the mainland ones, enabling and enacting each other.

Nonetheless, this postulated *koine* was relatively short-lived. After LH IIIB1, a dramatic reduction in Mycenaean pottery exported to the Cyclades and beyond suggests that Mycenaean trade in the Aegean suffered a blow; the pottery is now less standardised, and regional variations more apparent (Barber 1987: 226). By LH IIIB1, in Grotta for example, imported pottery from the mainland dramatically decreases. The breakdown of Mycenaean trade in LH IIIB could have led to the decline of Grotta as a gateway into the Aegean and a trade station (Cosmopoulos 1998). This phenomenon is observed on other islands too, such as Melos, Kea and possibly Rhodes, where mainland imports are reduced drastically without drying up completely (Mountjoy 2008; see also Karantzali 2001: 78, on pottery attributions in Rhodes).

At the same time as this decline in exchange connections, signs of unrest are indicated in new settlement patterns. Following seismic destruction, the settlement at Grotta was rebuilt on a different orientation, continuing in use throughout LH IIIC (Vlachopoulos 1999b: 303). Concern for defence increases, with fortification works built at Phylakopi in LH IIIB, and possibly also at Ayios Andreas on Siphnos; the existing defensive system at Ayia Irini incorporates a water source at this time. Another possible sign of disruption is the reversal of the LH IIIA nucleation trend in settlement patterns and a dispersal of habitation across the landscape

(e.g. on Naxos: Cosmopoulos 1998: 141). Changing settlement patterns, increased fortifications and decline in mainland imports could all reflect a reduced involvement of the islands in Mycenaean trade networks, and indeed the overall weakening of those networks in the period leading up to the destruction of the mainland palatial centres.

Following the collapse of these centres, the LH IIIC (Postpalatial) period sees further changes in settlement. Contraction in settlement size (such as the town at Grotta in LH IIIC; see Mountjoy 2008: 474) and increase in fortification are perhaps interlinked trends. Fortified sites include Koukounaries on Paros, where a large building and settlement were built on various terraces, suffering fire destruction in the course of LH IIIC (perhaps by hostile action) before seeing continued occupation (Schilardi 1984; 1992); Ayios Andreas on Siphnos, which continues from LH IIIB (Televantou 2001); and Grotta, where a fortification wall is built in LH IIIC (Lambrinoudakis and Philaniotou-Hadjianastasiou 2001). There is some evidence for other possible defensive posts in the Cyclades, such as Xobourgo on Tenos (Barber 1981: 11; Kourou 2001; for LH IIIC evidence in the Cyclades, see Vlachopoulos 2008: 489–90). It is worth noting that this is approximately the time when refuge settlements are established on Crete (Nowicki 2000). The walled settlements of Grotta, Ayia Irini, Phylakopi, Ayios Andreas, Koukounaries and Xobourgo most probably reflect a period of insecurity due to the collapse of the safety net provided by the smooth operation of control of trade routes in the Aegean. Certainly, the lack of contemporaneity argues against the theory of a simultaneous establishment of ‘refugee’ settlements in the Cyclades (Vlachopoulos 1999a: 83; 2008: 489–90; *contra* Schilardi 1984, who holds that the founders of Koukounaries came from some palatial centre on the mainland; Barber 1987: 227, also suggests a partial dispersal of mainland population after 1200 BC, which brought an influx of new settlers in the Cyclades).

A second feature in LH IIIC is a further decline in pottery imports. After the collapse of the palatial centres on the mainland, Mycenaean pottery in the islands was produced

locally (Mountjoy 2008: 469). While in other areas of Greece ceramic regionalism in LH IIIC Early is pronounced, the Cyclades show some stylistic uniformity from one island to another, leading Mountjoy (2008: 475) to suggest a possible pottery *koine*. That said, there are some differences, with the ‘Grotta Phase’ of LH IIIC Middle and Late on Naxos seemingly absent on the other islands (see Figure 2.6 for LH IIIC pottery from Naxos). Similarities are attested in pottery styles between different and disparate Aegean workshops (Vlachopoulos 2003: 229–31). For example, Kea, Paros and Melos exhibit local and Helladic features, while Naxos and possibly Kimolos appear more affiliated with Crete and the Dodecanese. Crete, which probably handles most of the maritime trade, apparently plays an important role in LH IIIC Middle, and LM IIIC ceramic wares rekindle island production (see Karantzali 2001: 78). The lack of uniformity indicates that each island was open to different influences (Vlachopoulos 2008), and does not seem to justify the idea of a *koine*. Rather the fragmented picture points to autonomous communities (Vlachopoulos 2008: 491), encouraged by the collapse of the palatial political economies. This absence of a primary political power within the later Mycenaean world may account for specific features of LH IIIC Middle elaborate ceramic styles in the islands, such as the combination of strong regionalism and external influences. And yet Grotta on Naxos is still a thriving community while Monolithos on Thera apparently reinstates the vital role of Thera in the intra-Aegean sea routes, heralding the island’s new importance from the Geometric period onwards (Doumas and Warren 1979; Vlachopoulos 2008: 490). In one sense, then, we return full circle to the ‘international spirit’ of the early EB II period, the only other time in the Bronze Age when the Cyclades are not caught up in ‘continental’ currents.



Figure 2.6. LH IIIC pots from the Kamini and Aplomata cemeteries on Naxos. Not to scale. Courtesy of Andreas Vlachopoulos.

This brief review of ‘Mycenaeanisation’ shows how study of the later LBA Cyclades is negatively affected by blanket attributions. As with the earlier periods treated here, Cycladic communities are treated through a continental lens, rather than on their own terms. Indeed, the islands are tied to, and perhaps even in some measure responsible for, the fate of mainland centres in LH IIIA–B. The expansion of inter-regional exchange routes to east and west being so critical to the emergence and survival of mainland palaces,

the island archipelago may have been an even more significant gateway than before. With regular contacts between Greece and the eastern Mediterranean drastically reduced after LH IIIB, the Cycladic islands take on yet another configuration, with multicentric nodes of a network largely displaced from mainland centres and substituted by smaller components, evident in the stylistic influences attested on local ceramic material of individual island centres.

The Cyclades in the ‘Dark Ages’ and the Early Iron Age

While new data provide a much fuller background, even for the ‘darkest’ period, they still fail to explain why, for such a relatively long period, the people of Greece were so ‘unambitious materially, when they had supported cultures of marked achievement earlier and would do so again’ (Dickinson 2006a: 238). Moreover, it seems that the Mycenaean heritage of early Iron Age Greece is not very conspicuous (Dickinson 2006a; 2006b).

There is only limited evidence for the history of habitation in the Cyclades during the early Iron Age, with occasional finds reported for the Submycenaean and Protogeometric periods. At Grotta on Naxos, the abandoned Mycenaean settlement saw renewed activity during the Protogeometric period in the form of graves and tomb enclosures (Lambrinoudakis 1988; Lambrinoudakis and Philaniotou-Hadjianastasiou 2001: 166–67). At Koukounaries, a new town was built in the Geometric period over the ruined LH IIIC mansion; the Geometric buildings are widely separated in time from the Mycenaean ones and differently aligned (Schilardi 1984). The acropolis of Ayios Andreas on Siphnos was deserted and remained abandoned, only to be reinhabited in the eighth century BC (Televantou 2001: 208–10). Evidence suggests that occupation at Ayia Irini on Kea continued rather later than elsewhere, perhaps until around the middle of the eleventh century BC, with relevant pottery retrieved mainly at the Temple. Offerings were made in the

Temple shrine throughout the early Iron Age, perhaps continuously until it became a shrine of Dionysos some time before 500 BC (Caskey 1986: 39–43; Barber 1987: 244–46). Zagora on Andros and the islet of Donousa were settled in the Protogeometric period for the first time, and they constitute remote and defensive sites.

Discussion and Conclusions

The proposed sequence, then, is as follows: from expansion of connectivity in EB II, to contraction in EB III; followed by a period of steady expansion again through the MBA leading to the high point of early LBA, only for the Theran eruption to recalibrate and shift the direction of connectivity; this in turn is followed by further network growth into new horizons, only to see a radical reorientation and contraction once again at the end of the Bronze Age ... before a new cycle in the Iron Age.

How are we to interpret or explain this ‘pulsing’ of connectivity across the millennia (see Horden and Purcell 2006: 735; a term used by Braudel for the Mediterranean as a whole), this cycling of influence clockwise around the Aegean, from Anatolia, to Crete to the mainland, as if each landmass takes its turn? Cosmopoulos (1998: 141–43) explains it, at least for the LBA, in terms of changing levels of integration into Minoan/Mycenaean networks, as if Naxos, at least, is sometimes full in the stream of connections and sometimes not. A similar argument has been made for Kythera (Broodbank *et al.* 2005). There is something very progressive about this focus on connectivity as an explanatory factor. On closer inspection, however, in the form proposed here, it perpetuates the assumption of continent-first geography, and does not espouse the ‘inside-out geography’ discussed earlier (Horden and Purcell 2000; 2006). If we are to give this notion its due weight, then the Cyclades, being at the heart of the inside, should always be considered potentially pivotal – as Horden and Purcell (2006: 734) put it, Mediterranean islands are ‘tightly engaged in networks of which they are often the principal nodes’. In this sense, then, the ‘stream’ of exchange is not

simply generated on continents and then directed somewhere, a stream into which islands like the Cyclades may or may not fall. The stream could not even get going without these islands – they are always there, in the mix from the outset. Some islands within the Cyclades may then prosper more than others, according to the frequency, character, directionality and distance of trade. Hence, we argue that it is misguided to portray the Cyclades as always having trade directed through or past them by other, usually continental players. We have seen above how, in the Early, Middle and Late Bronze Ages, the Cyclades are neither primary nor secondary, but just always there, enabling interaction.

Is this pulsing somehow characteristic of archipelagos, more than other kinds of geographical regions? Is it perhaps attributable in some way to the role of hubs and gateways in such environments? And how is it that for each of these pulses, the scale and direction of connectivity shifts? A component that has not been given nearly enough consideration is the active and pivotal role played by materialities in creating and changing the space of the archipelago. Whether raw materials or finished products, artefacts or artworks, these materialities are indivisibly social and material and are the key to understanding the changing faces of the archipelago over time. Some materialities anchor connectivity across distance more effectively than others. We need to find ways of dealing better with regional materialities.

For example, although the interface of Minoan and Cycladic cultural practices is seeing more subtle treatments (despite valid critique in Broodbank [2004](#)), cultural transmission in the Mycenaean Cyclades is still seen largely in terms of population movement. More explicit comparison over time, as we have attempted briefly here, may help bring out patterns too. For example, the uptake of Minoan traits in Cycladic communities seems relatively innovative, as the ‘foreign’ trends are combined with indigenous features. On the other hand, Mycenaean influence seems to appear rather abruptly, after the LM IB/LH IIA destructions,

and in the first stages at least remains a foreign body set distinctively against a submerged local background. This is best illustrated in the pottery, as imported fine wares are clearly differentiated from local production, and imitation/integration processes are certainly slower.

Hence, different materialities enact different kinds of connectivity – perhaps even to the extent that the islands were more active in participating, promoting and finally benefiting from extended trade networks during the period of Minoan hegemony than during the time of Mycenaean expansion. A brief mention is worth making here of the absence, until now, of any evidence for the Linear B script in the Cyclades, in contrast to the Linear A documents found there. This clue may also be used to argue against a direct involvement of the Cycladic communities in trade and the limited degree of integration in high-level administrative policies as clearly performed at mainland centres. Instead, it is here suggested that the attachment, voluntary or not, of the islands into the Mycenaean sphere of influence probably served to ensure connectivity and facilitate the flow of trade towards the east Mediterranean, a convention which obviously benefited all participating mainland partners. This plan apparently worked successfully during the floruit of the Mycenaean states and inevitably collapsed together with the palace economy and its needs. That was probably the last time we could treat the archipelagos as a unit of analysis for their external relations, since the evidence for the last period of the LBA forces us to look at individual island trajectories.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to Christos Doumas for permission to reproduce photographs from the Akrotiri excavation archive, and for reading and commenting on the manuscript. Andreas Vlachopoulos generously provided photographs of LH IIIC pottery from Naxos, and useful comments on our text. We also thank the editors for all their work in bringing this volume together.

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3 Early Island Exploitations: Productive and Subsistence Strategies on the Prehistoric Balearic Islands

Damià Ramis

Abstract

The Balearic Islands are a singular and unique territory in the Mediterranean, mainly because of its isolation, both geographic and cultural (as inferred from the scarce archaeological evidence for external contacts during the early and mid-second millennium Cal BC). This chapter explores how cultural adaptations occurred among the early communities who inhabited this archipelago in the Bronze Age, as evidenced by the exploitation of mineral resources (copper and tabular flint) and animal management strategies. The evidence for mineral exploitation and circulation suggests a high connectivity among Majorcan and Menorcan communities in order to obtain these special raw materials. The animal management strategies, based on sheep/goat, cattle and pig husbandry, show very conservative behaviour throughout the second millennium Cal BC in Majorca and Menorca. This pattern only diverges in an extreme environment such as that of the small island of Formentera, where excavation in Cova des Riuets shows a particular interest in the exploitation of wild resources, mainly fish and seabirds.

Introduction

The Balearic archipelago is a heterogeneous territory in the west Mediterranean formed by four main islands that make up two smaller island groups (Figure 3.1). The so-called Gymnesic Islands include the two largest islands, Majorca and Menorca (at 3640 and 694 sq km respectively). The shortest distance separating these two islands is about 35 km with a minimum sea depth of about 80 m. The second group, known as the Pithyusic Islands, is situated 80 km to the southwest of Majorca, and the seas between them are more than 500 m deep. This second group comprises Ibiza (571 sq km) and Formentera (83 sq km). These two islands are separated from each other by a narrow channel of just 7 km, which also includes several islets. In general, the relief of these islands is not pronounced. Only Majorca has an important mountain range – the Serra de Tramuntana that reaches a maximum height of 1445 m and is about 100 km long but no more than 10 km wide. It more or less follows the north coast of the island.

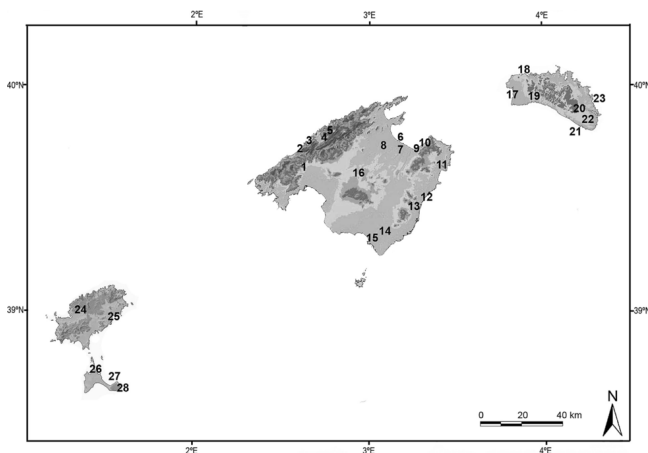


Figure 3.1. Map of the Balearic Islands showing the location of archaeological sites mentioned in the text. Majorca: 1. Son Matge; 2. Son Gallard; 3. Cova de Muleta; 4. Coval den Pep Rave; 5. Coval Simó; 6. Illot des Porros; 7. Es Figuerat de Son Real; 8. Ca na Cotxera; 9. S'Arenalet de Son Colom; 10. S'Aigua Dolça; 11. Canyamel; 12. Cova des Moro; 13. S'Hospitalet Vell; 14. Es Velar; 15. Son Danús; 16. Sencelles. Menorca: 17. Cala Blanca; 18. Cala Morell; 19. Son Mercer de Baix; 20. Biniai Nou; 21. Cap de Forma; 22. Cornia Nou;

23. Illa den Colom. Ibiza: 24. Es Pouàs; 25. Puig de ses Torretes. Formentera: 26. Ca na Costa; 27. Cova des Riuets; 28. Sa Cala de la Mola.

The Balearic Islands represent a peculiar territory in the Mediterranean for several reasons. One of the main factors to take into account is the geographic configuration of this archipelago. There are no other islands that may serve as stepping stones in the journey to or from the mainland. The minimum distance to cross is approximately 80 km for the Pithyusic Islands, and nearly 200 km for Majorca. The dominant winds and currents moreover do not favour a direct crossing. The cultural identities of the Neolithic and Bronze Age communities that inhabited the west Mediterranean mainlands, finally, were quite different from those of islands in the central and eastern basins. All these factors probably contributed to the late settlement of the Balearic Islands in the third millennium Cal BC, which made them the last of the larger territories in the Mediterranean to be colonised. As a result, it led to the late development of local cultural identities. All these factors result in a very different reality when compared to other Mediterranean islands.

The objective of this chapter is to explore the cultural adaptations to this particular environment of the human groups that inhabited the Balearic Islands in the Bronze Age. Previous studies of the cultural dynamics in the early prehistoric Balearic Islands have mostly been based on architecture, artefact typologies and radiocarbon dates. This chapter represents an attempt to offer an alternative approach based on metallurgical and faunal studies, which are recent innovations in Balearic archaeology. These shed light on local strategies for exploiting mineral (mainly metal) and animal resources and on contacts within and beyond the archipelago.

Human Settlement of the Balearic Islands

Traditionally, human settlement of the main Mediterranean islands is considered as a roughly synchronous process occurring between the early and mid-Holocene (e.g. Cherry 1990; Patton 1996). The Balearic Islands, however, were not occupied until as late as the third millennium Cal BC.

It has been argued that there was an earlier period of sporadic exploitation without permanent settlement that may go back to the Epipaleolithic (e.g. Guerrero and Calvo 2008). The evidence for this is, however, uncertain, as it is mainly based on chance finds that lack systematic recording and radiometric dates of their archaeological contexts. These finds consist of two flaked stone assemblages on the coast of Menorca (Fullola *et al.* 2005). It has also been argued that Majorca was first permanently settled as early as the beginning of the third millennium Cal BC, referring to radiocarbon dates of charcoal samples from Son Matge (Waldren 1982; Guerrero and Calvo 2008) and Son Gallard (Guerrero *et al.* 2005). These dates have, however, been questioned as suffering from the 'old wood effect' and contamination (Van Strydonck *et al.* 2005a).

Other scholars propose human arrival and colonisation of the Balearics in the late third millennium Cal BC (Lull *et al.* 2004; Micó 2005; 2006; Alcover 2008). They draw on chronological markers such as Beaker sherds that are otherwise rare in the Balearics (Ramis 2010). Beaker pottery does not occur in many Majorcan sites of the third millennium Cal BC and is completely unknown in Menorca. The Beaker phenomenon is therefore of limited importance in the process of settlement of the Balearic Islands.

Leaving aside the early third millennium dates obtained on charcoal, which have not been confirmed by short-life samples from the same archaeological contexts, the earliest direct evidence of human presence with reliable radiocarbon dates is provided by human bones from Cova de Muleta (Van Strydonck *et al.* 2005a) and Cova des Moro (Guerrero and Calvo 2008). These bones interestingly also testify to a predominantly terrestrial diet. The radiocarbon dates of Cova de Muleta (2470–2200 Cal BC) and Cova des Moro

(2470–2290 Cal BC) demonstrate that Majorca was already inhabited ca. 2300 Cal BC. These human remains are without reliable contextual assemblages, but Beaker pottery or Chalcolithic/Early Bronze metals have not been found in either of these caves (Waldren 1982; Ramis *et al.* 2005b).

The evidence for early occupation and colonisation elsewhere in the Balearics would seem to corroborate the later dates found for Majorca. For Menorca, the main piece of evidence is a human bone from the megalithic tomb of Biniai Nou 1, which has been dated to 2280–2030 Cal BC (Plantalamor and Marquès 2001).

In Ibiza, human remains from the palaeontological deposit of Es Pouàs have been dated to 2290–2130 Cal BC (Alcover 2008) and demonstrate that the island was settled before the second millennium Cal BC. This is somewhat older than the cattle bone from the open-air site of Puig de ses Torretes, which has been dated to ca. 2150–1900 Cal BC (Costa and Benito 2000).

On Formentera, early but so far only preliminarily published evidence comes from the site of Cova des Riuets, where the earliest occupation assemblage has been dated to a very early moment of the second millennium Cal BC (Marlasca 2008; 2010). This date matches that of the only megalithic tomb on Formentera, Ca na Costa (Van Strydonck *et al.* 2005b; see also Fernández *et al.* 1976). Its artefact assemblage is similar to the materials recorded on Majorca and Menorca during this period. In addition, Formentera has yielded prehistoric habitation structures that look very much like the *navetes* from Majorca and Menorca but so far remain imprecisely dated (Costa and Fernández 1992). On the latter islands, the *naveta* is the characteristic habitation structure of the second millennium Cal BC. It was an elongated, horseshoe-shaped building constructed in cyclopean technique; it may be up to 20 m in length (e.g. Rosselló-Bordoy 1964–65; Plantalamor 1991). All in all, the evidence strongly suggests that Formentera supported a stable population in the Early Bronze Age.

Additional evidence has finally been found on the small

island of Cabrera (13 sq km), which is situated about 15 km south of Majorca. A recent survey has recorded fragments of cylindrical or convex containers with horizontal handles in several caves and open-air sites. This type of pottery is characteristic of the late third and early second millennium Cal BC in Majorca and Menorca, and it is not found in later assemblages. While there is no evidence for a stable occupation of Cabrera in the Bronze Age, these remains show at least the mobility of Majorcan communities to explore and exploit the wider environment of their island (Trias *et al.* 2009).

This rapid survey shows that the first evidence for human presence on each island is roughly contemporary, and covers by and large the later centuries of the third millennium Cal BC. It nevertheless remains uncertain to what extent there might be a time gap between these early dates and permanent human occupation. Some of the environmental changes used as indicators for the moment of human intervention in the Balearic ecosystems have proven to be of rather limited reliability (e.g. Ramis *et al.* 2002). To begin with, pollen cores from fluvial sedimentary basins cannot accurately be associated with the timing of vegetation changes (e.g. Hernández-Gasch *et al.* 2011). The presence of endemic mammals on these Mediterranean islands can moreover no longer be considered the solid indicator for human absence it was once assumed to be, as the *Praemegaceros cazioti* endemic deer in Sardinia has recently been dated to the mid-sixth millennium Cal BC, which implies a long period of coexistence with humans (Benzi *et al.* 2007). An absence of indigenous species in early archaeological assemblages does not therefore necessarily mean the extinction of these animals.

Taking all these factors into account, it is not possible to put forth any conclusive dates for the first human arrival to the Balearics. It nevertheless seems reasonable to assume that Chalcolithic, if not late Neolithic, groups moved in some time in the third millennium Cal BC (Table 3.1). The central Mediterranean islands of Lampedusa and Malta demonstrate that technology and distance were not limiting

factors for colonisation during the Neolithic. Some early pottery types found in Majorca and Menorca have indeed been related to the late Neolithic, as they can be associated with the so-called Véraza pottery that occurs on both sides of the east Pyrenees in modern Catalonia and Languedoc and that lasted until the end of the third millennium Cal BC (e.g. Martín 1998; Vaquer 1998). Other Majorcan finds may be associated with regional Beaker styles, and suggest that further arrivals may have added to this initial substratum very shortly afterwards. It is indeed unlikely that the human colonisation of the Balearics was a single event.

Table 3.1. Schematic cultural sequence of the Balearic Islands in the third and second millennia Cal BC, as proposed in this chapter.

Fourth millennium Cal BC	Ecological indicators for human absence in Majorca and Menorca
Early/mid-third millennium Cal BC	Lack of reliable evidence for human presence or absence
Mid/late third millennium Cal BC (Late Neolithic (?)/Chalcolithic/Early Bronze)	First direct chronometric evidence for human presence in each of the main Balearic islands Colonisation period Beaker pottery influence in Majorca and Pitiusics Early arrival of tin bronze
Early/mid-second millennium Cal BC (Early Bronze)	Development of the first autochthonous culture, with the consolidation of the <i>naveta</i> as the main habitation architectonic structure
Late second millennium Cal BC (Late Bronze)	Cultural transformation with the beginning of the Talaiotic period in Menorca and Majorca

Regardless of the chronological labels used, it is my contention that classifying the early settlement of the Balearics as Late Neolithic, Chalcolithic or Early Bronze is in any case less than helpful when it comes to understanding the cultural dynamics. The various cultural groups on the surrounding mainland in this period that may be related to the early settlers of the Balearics, such as the Véraza (e.g. Martín and Mestres 2002), Fonbouisie (e.g. Gascó 2003) or Beaker complexes (e.g. Maya and Mestres 1996), in any case cover more than one of these periods. Whether people related to these cultural groups arrived first in the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age is a question that currently cannot be resolved. It is by contrast far more pertinent to highlight the cultural continuity in the Balearic Islands between the third millennium Cal BC and the first half of the second one. The absence of any cultural break offers the possibility of a diachronic study of the human groups that initially settled the archipelago.

Interpretations of the cultural sequence between ca. 2500–1500 Cal BC have not only been based on a very fragmentary record, but the material culture on the islands has also generally been considered as the product of successive overseas introductions. In some cases, cultural changes have been deduced from the presence or absence of certain decorative features in pottery. It has thus been argued that so-called late Beaker pottery arrived after the early Beakers, that the first use of the rock-cut tombs was later than the construction of megaliths and that the *navetes* (Figure 3.2) were built after several centuries of living in round huts made of perishable materials. It is my suggestion by contrast that it is far more likely that all these archaeological features were roughly simultaneous on the Balearic Islands (Ramis 2006; 2010). At present, the archaeological record is still incomplete, but there appear to be many more and stronger indications of cultural continuity rather than of disruption or change during the Bronze Age.



Figure 3.2. View of a part of the Bronze Age village or *navetes* of S'Hospitalet Vell (Majorca). It may be considered as a typical settlement of the mid-second millennium Cal BC in the Balearic Islands. Photograph courtesy of the Museu de Manacor.

Exploitation of Local Mineral Resources and External Contacts

The human groups inhabiting the Balearic Islands in the late third and early second millennia Cal BC had a markedly self-sufficient economy, as their archaeological remains show. They exploited and relied almost exclusively on the resources that could be obtained within the inhabited territory. There are nevertheless two elements that are inconsistent with this representation of isolated and self-sufficient communities in Majorca and Menorca. The first is the strong homogeneity in the architecture and portable material culture that presupposes the circulation of goods as well as technical and stylistic knowledge to replicate them. Second, mineral resources used such as copper and tabular flint are scarce and occur in very few places on these two islands.

Techniques for copper mining and metallurgy were known by the human groups who lived on Majorca in the late third millennium Cal BC (Ramis *et al.* 2005a). Copper ores on the island are, however, restricted to the northern mountains of the Serra de Tramuntana, even if there is evidence for

copper smelting in sites well away from the mountains such as Ca na Cotxera and Es Velar. The implication is that copper minerals arrived at these settlements and were worked in the context of a domestic economy.

Tabular flint was another special mineral resource exploited by early Majorcan communities. It has been considered as one of the most important sources of raw material used for making tools (Morell 1988), in particular the bifacially flaked blades used as sickles (Waldren *et al.* 1984). Tabular flint was probably preferred over other materials because it did not need any preliminary preparation and was easier to work. Only two sources of tabular flint are known in Majorca: Sencelles, in the centre of the island, and Son Danús, in the south (Morell 1988). Other quarries cannot be excluded, but it is clear that it is an uncommon material with a very limited natural distribution. Even so, tabular blades are found in many Majorcan sites of the late third and early second millennia Cal BC, and have also been recorded in Menorca, where flint does not occur naturally. The general view is that the distribution and exchange of these mineral resources among the highly egalitarian and self-sufficient groups of the islands may best be understood in terms of family and social relationships (Coll 1989, 1993; Lull *et al.* 1999).

Trade or exchange contacts beyond the archipelago are very scarce, and island communities appear to have become very isolated after the colonisation or early settlement stage. While the early cultural elements of Balearic assemblages show marked affinities with mainland cultures (e.g. Fernández-Miranda 1984–85; 1993), they appear to have developed independently from external influences over the second millennium Cal BC. So-called ‘Epicampaniform’ pottery styles are, for example, unknown on the Balearic Islands, while they are characteristic of the mainland regions in the northwest Mediterranean during the early second millennium Cal BC (e.g. Gascó 2001; Barceló 2008).

That does not mean there were no contacts at all, of course, and a small number of imports can be dated to the beginning of the second millennium Cal BC. This includes tin

in Majorca, when bronze first appears in the megalith of S'Aigua Dolça at a date before ca. 1700 Cal BC (Coll 2003; Rovira 2003). At S'Arenalet de Son Colom, tin is found in a context with Beaker pottery and a radiocarbon chronology of ca. 2150–1950 Cal BC (unpublished data). Earlier claims about the association of Beaker pottery with tin alloys were based on evidence from Son Matge (Hoffman 1991; Rovira *et al.* 1991), but they remain problematic because of the unreliable contextual associations at this site (Ramis *et al.* 2002). The presence of tin alloys not only points to external contacts but also suggests the regions with which the Balearic communities were in contact, as tin-bronze metallurgy is well documented in southern France and the Pyrenees (Rovira 2002), while in east Iberia, metallurgy maintained its archaic Chalcolithic character (Montero 1993; Fernández-Miranda *et al.* 1996; Murillo-Barroso and Montero-Ruiz 2012).

The low percentage of tin in bronzes and the rarity of metal items during this period nevertheless suggest that contact between the Balearic Islands and the nearby mainland remained sporadic. One object from the Bronze Age site of Puig de ses Torretes in Ibiza, for instance, has a very peculiar composition dominated by 57% lead and 41% copper but just 1% tin. It has been suggested that this is due to the local availability of the raw materials, as lead is the only metal found on Ibiza (Costa and Benito 2000).

Other instances of occasional external influences are the individual graves at Son Gallard that have been dated to the mid-second millennium Cal BC and that represent a funerary ritual otherwise virtually unknown in Balearic early prehistory (Guerrero *et al.* 2005). Some pottery styles recorded on Menorca in Bronze Age contexts may be related to the Tyrrhenian islands and perhaps provide evidence of indirect influence (Depalmas and Plantalamor 2003).

Most cultural features that emerged in the late third millennium Cal BC had become well established by the mid-second millennium. As a result, most portable material culture, settlement architecture and funerary customs in Majorca and Menorca are characterised by a marked

homogeneity, which may be interpreted as evidence of close social connections among the island communities.

At the same time, the notably archaic appearance of certain materials points to a high level of isolation of Balearic communities. The survival of prismatic and pyramidal V-perforated buttons of bone and ivory for several centuries after their disappearance on the mainland offers a good case in point (e.g. Fernández-Miranda 1978) (Figure 3.3).

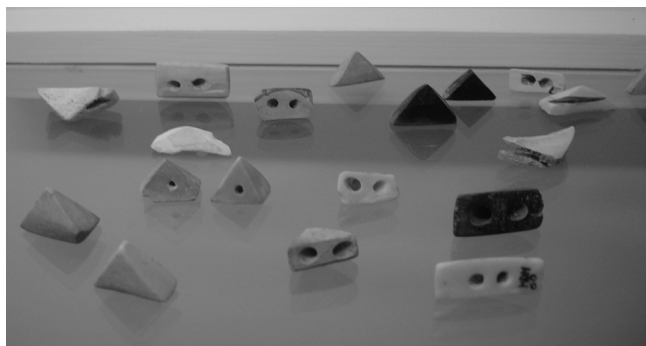


Figure 3.3. Sample of prismatic and pyramidal V-perforated buttons, made of bone and ivory. They come from different sites in Menorca and are kept in the Museu del Seminari in Ciutadella (Menorca). Photograph by Damià Ramis.

This situation began to change by the last quarter of the second millennium Cal BC, when we find increasing evidence of external contacts in what was moreover a broader context of maritime networks across the west Mediterranean of the Late Bronze Age. Local communication, meanwhile, did not decrease either, as this is probably the prehistoric period that saw a most intense relationship between Majorca and Menorca. Evidence includes tabular flint in particular, which does not occur naturally on Menorca, but flaked tabular blades have nevertheless been found in some number on the island (e.g. Plantalamor 2002) (Figure 3.4). These largely match the typical Majorcan tradition of these items (Waldren *et al.* 1984), that in Majorca have been found only in assemblages dated to the late third or the first half of the second

millennium Cal BC.

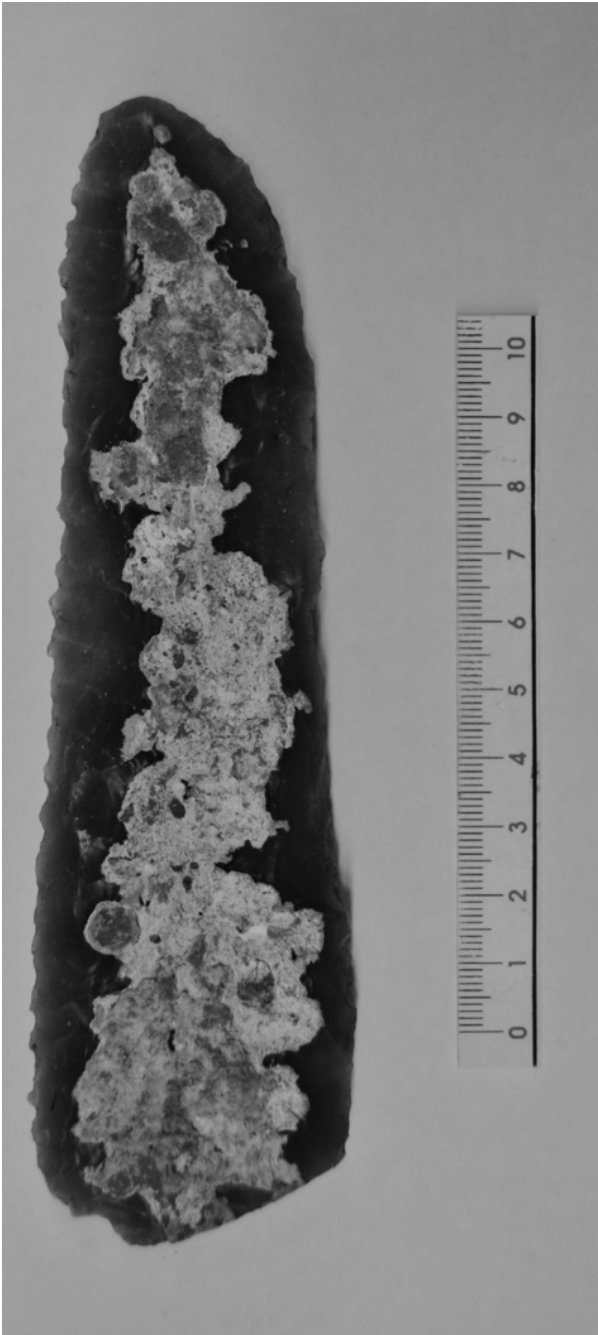


Figure 3.4. Flaked tabular blade from an unknown locality,

held in the Museu de Menorca. Other tabular blade fragments have been found occasionally on the north coast of the island. Photograph by Damià Ramis (courtesy of the Museu de Menorca).

The material evidence of the late second millennium Cal BC is overall quite similar on both islands, with the notable exception of funerary and habitation structures that were more variable in Menorca. Megalithic burials seem to have been more frequent in Menorca than in Majorca since the early settlement period, and it is possible to track their transformation into the peculiarly Menorcan phenomenon of funerary *navetes* (Plantalamor 1991; Plantalamor and Marquès 2003; Gili *et al.* 2006). All along, natural caves and rock-cut tombs were also used for burials. Menorca also saw habitation *navetes* in use at the same time as minor monumental huts in the second millennium Cal BC. Beyond these specifically Menorcan buildings, however, very similar kinds of habitation *navetes* and funerary artificial caves were in use on both islands, and, most of all, the same types of ceramic, bone and metal objects were produced and used.

By the end of the second millennium Cal BC, material culture in Majorca and Menorca was very homogeneous, as it had been before. The two key features of the Early Bronze Age – tabular flint and copper – lost their significance because the flaked lithic industry became sporadic, and there is no evidence of copper smelting in late second millennium Cal BC settlements. Metals did arrive to Majorca in this period, but it is unclear whether native copper sources in the Tramuntana mountains continued to be exploited. Interestingly, there is evidence for copper smelting in Menorca in the central part of the second millennium Cal BC, as fragments of smelting crucibles have been found in the habitation *navetes* of Son Mercer de Baix (Plantalamor and Rita 1984), Cala Blanca (Juan and Plantalamor 1997) and more recently near the copper ore of Illa den Colom (Salvà *et al.* 2010).

While similarities in material culture between Majorca and Menorca invariably denote continued contacts, the

archaeological record shows elements of a gradual formation process of distinctive cultural identities on the islands. External contacts were at the forefront of these developments, as a progressive increase in long-distance trade across the central and west Mediterranean is notable in the second half of the second millennium Cal BC (e.g. Fernández-Miranda 1987; Giardino 1995; Gómez Toscano and Fundoni 2011). Because of their location, the Balearic Islands found themselves between the two key players in these networks that were the central Mediterranean and the so-called 'Atlantic façade' (Ruiz-Gálvez Priego 1993; 1997). As the main area of interaction between these systems was situated in south Iberia and the Strait of Gibraltar, the Balearic Islands played a marginal role in these new relationships. This is most evident from the fact that many types of metal objects that circulated widely in the central Mediterranean and Atlantic Europe are entirely absent from the archipelago. The sheer volume of metals is moreover very low in the Balearics compared to other Mediterranean regions, and as the intensification of maritime contacts in the late second millennium Cal BC is usually seen as a function of the exploitation and exchange of metals, it is very well possible that the scarcity of mineral resources on the islands could go a long way to explain the minimal involvement of Balearic communities in Bronze Age Mediterranean exchange networks.

At the same time, however, the Balearic Islands are so strategically situated that communication between these networks is relatively easy, and it should therefore be no surprise that there is evidence for some degree of interaction and influence during the Late Bronze Age. This is particularly notable in metal technology and typology, and includes technological changes such as high proportions of tin and the inclusion of lead in bronze alloys. New types of objects like swords, chisels and pectorals also appeared in Majorca and Menorca, giving rise to what has traditionally been defined as Talayotic metallurgy (Delibes de Castro and Fernández-Miranda 1988; Rovira *et al.* 1991). As these objects were rapidly adopted and appropriated into local traditions, it is often difficult to establish the geographic

origins of these changes, but it is in any case evident that they represent a clear break with Early Bronze Age metallurgy under external influence.

By and large, the presence of Atlantic or south Iberian bronze objects on the Balearics was rather low when compared to other regions, and some object types remained completely unknown on the islands, even if these were widely distributed over Atlantic Europe and the central Mediterranean. Two small metal hoards from the Late Bronze Age found on the small island of Formentera at La Savina and Can Gallet contain different types of axes and an ingot, and may be considered as representative of the kinds of objects that reached the Balearics (Delibes de Castro and Fernández-Miranda 1988).

A very different type of evidence is provided by a small number of bones of red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) that have been identified in Menorca in late second-millennium Cal BC assemblages at Cap de Forma (Depalmas and Marras 2003), as well as in an early first-millennium Cal BC context at Cornia Nou (Anglada *et al.* 2011). The introduction of deer on the island is likely related to the exchange networks of the turn of the millennium.

The coastal site of Cap de Forma is also a good example of a new site category that developed in the second half of the second millennium Cal BC. Settlements situated close to the seashore had existed along the late third and second millennia Cal BC, as is evident from sites such as Arenalet de Son Colom and Cala Blanca. The new types of coastal site were rather different, however, as they can best be described as coastal promontory forts defended by inland-facing walls. Their function has been suggested as playing a part in the maritime networks of the late second millennium Cal BC (e.g. Salvà *et al.* 2002; Guerrero 2008). They are known in all four Balearic Islands, including Formentera (Ramon and Colomar 1999; 2010). Most have, however, not been excavated. In the case of Cap de Forma, a long-term and extensive excavation project is underway (Plantalamor *et al.* 1999; Depalmas and Marras 2003), while a new research project started in the walled promontory of Cala Morell in

2011 by excavating 1 of the 13 *navetes*. The initial results show a domestic space with a central hearth (Figure 3.5).



Figure 3.5. View of the fortified promontory of Cala Morell in north Menorca. The first of a group of 13 *navetes* found on these cliffs has been excavated since 2011. Photographs by

Damià Ramis.

It is hoped that these investigations will give us a better understanding of what looks like an indigenous interest in the sea. It is interesting in this respect that there is so far at least no record of imports in these coastal sites. Another curious fact is that Late Bronze Age objects from the Balearics have never been found or at least recognised outside the islands.

Subsistence Strategies and Animal Husbandry

Our knowledge of subsistence strategies among early Balearic communities is very fragmentary. It is mainly based on faunal analyses, while there are some very limited data about vegetation. Evidence for agriculture in the early stages of Balearic prehistory is very scarce. Given the Neolithic economy of the presumed early colonisers, it has been assumed that agriculture was practised right from the start, and it is in line with that assumption that a common local type of lithic blade has usually been interpreted as a sickle (Waldren *et al.* 1984; Morell and Querol 1987). Some scholars have, however, noted an absence from the archaeological record of the late third millennium Cal BC of features usually related to agriculture, such as millstones and grain storage pits (Lull *et al.* 1999). It is therefore not possible to evaluate the importance of agriculture in the subsistence economy of early communities on the Balearic Islands.

A handful of barley seeds (*Hordeum vulgare*) in a funerary rock-cut tomb on Menorca provides the earliest direct evidence for cereal agriculture. A sample was dated to the mid-second millennium Cal BC (Arnau *et al.* 2003). Recent excavations of roughly contemporary sites such as Coval Simó (Early Bronze Age; Coll 2010) and S'Hospitalet Vell (Mid/Late Bronze Age; unpublished data) have, however, not been able to replicate this finding, despite systematic sediment sieving. In Menorca, by contrast, excavation in the

south building attached to the main *talayot* or stone tower of Cornia Nou have yielded a substantial quantity of cereals, in a context dated to the beginning of the first millennium Cal BC (Anglada *et al.* 2011).

The island of Majorca has yielded most evidence that allows us to understand the faunal exploitation strategies of the early prehistoric communities (Table 3.2). In a study of seven faunal assemblages, Ramis (2006) distinguished two main chronological periods. He situated the first one around the end of the third millennium Cal BC, largely on the basis of the remains recovered from the rock shelter of Coval Simó during the first campaigns (Coll 2000; 2001) and the faunal assemblage from the excavation in Arenale de Son Colom (Ramis *et al.* 2007). Additional evidence came from the otherwise unpublished campaign at Son Matge in 1999 and from two stratified assemblages at Ca na Cotxera, where the lower assemblage dates to the late third millennium Cal BC and the upper one to the mid-second millennium Cal BC (Cantarellas 1972).

Table 3.2. Relative distribution of the domestic taxa in the faunal assemblages from Majorca, after Ramis (2006). They have been grouped in two periods. The marked cattle increase in the Late Bronze Age is evident.

Site	NISP	Domestic taxa (% NISP)		
Ovicaprin Cattle		Pig		
Late third/ early second millennia Cal BC				
Ca na Cotxera (B + C)	255	87.1	6.3	6.7
Coval Simó	1747	97.3	1.9	0.8
S'Arenale	149	89.3	8.7	2.0

de Son				
Colom				
Coval den	97	90.3	9.7	0
Pep Rave				
Son Matge	86	89.5	7.0	3.5
Total	2334	95.1	3.3	1.6
Late				
second				
millennium				
Cal BC				
Cova des	787	66.9	29.0	4.1
Moro				
Canyamel	1646	75.3	20.4	4.3
Es	158	60.8	26.6	12.7
Figueral				
de Son				
Real				
Illot des	1012	61.6	28.3	10.2
Porros				
Total	3603	69.0	24.7	6.3

The second group of faunal assemblages dates to the late second millennium Cal BC. These assemblages included material from the early excavations at the sites of Es Figueral de Son Real (Rosselló-Bordoy and Camps 1972) and Canyamel (Rosselló-Bordoy and Camps 1976; Rosselló-Bordoy 1979). A Late Bronze Age assemblage came from the 1999–2002 excavations at Cova des Moro (Ramis *et al.* 2005b). Additional information came from the Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age site of Coval den Pep Rave (Coll 1991) and Late Bronze Age contexts at Illot des Porros (Hernández-Gasch *et al.* 2002).

Overall, it is evident that very few faunal species were initially introduced to the island. The five domestic mammals introduced were sheep (*Ovis aries*), goats (*Capra hircus*), cattle (*Bos taurus*), pig (*Sus domesticus*) and dog (*Canis familiaris*). All these taxa were clearly introduced as food resources, with the exception of the last one. There is

no evidence for the consumption of dogs in most of Balearic prehistory. The early faunal assemblages furthermore include two rodents: the dormouse (*Eliomys quercinus*) and the mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*), which presumably represent involuntary introductions.

The faunal assemblages dated to the late third millennium Cal BC include very high proportions of ovicaprines (sheep and goat) that make up 90% of domestic species (all estimates of faunal abundance are based on the number of identified specimens or NISP). In the late second millennium, this percentage decreased to 60–75%, with a matching increase of cattle to 20–30% of the domestic fauna (from a base of less than 10%).

Exploitation of wild faunal resources played only a very small part in subsistence strategies. It involved modest foraging of marine molluscs and occasional hunting of marine, aquatic or nocturnal birds. Quite remarkable is the complete absence of evidence for fish consumption, which interestingly matches the results of palaeo-diet studies based on stable isotope analyses of human bones of early inhabitants of Majorca and Menorca (Van Strydonck *et al.* 2002; 2005b). The largest wild mammal in the prehistoric environment of the Balearic Islands was the monk seal (*Monachus monachus*), but there is practically no evidence that it was hunted. The only monk seal remains in Bronze Age assemblages are two teeth that had been worked as pendants (Sanders 1988; Hernández-Gasch *et al.* 2002).

The available evidence is thus roughly in agreement with the agrarian model for Mediterranean Neolithic communities proposed by Halstead (2002), which posits a subsistence economy based on intensive horticulture and balanced stockbreeding of several mammal species. The faunal data from Majorca also show, however, that there was no such diversity and balanced livestock in the early phase of human occupation on the island. The dominance of goat in these early stages is in contrast very marked, and it is possible that an initially low demographic density could have involved weak territorial divisions that encouraged mobility of the first communities. If so, the initial specialisation in sheep

and goat husbandry on Majorca could then be ascribed to the ease of transporting and breeding these animals.

Specialisation in a single livestock group may be interpreted as a sign of a pastoralist economy, with communities specialising in the exploitation of secondary products such as milk and its by-products. There is, however, no evidence for this in the early faunal assemblages on Majorca, as the goat mortality profiles are consistent with the exploitation of meat and other primary products, that is, with an important group of animals butchered in the optimal growth stage (e.g. Payne 1973; Greenfield 1999; 2010).

Animal husbandry constituted the basic strategy for faunal exploitation during the second millennium Cal BC as the importance of wild resources remained low. Compared to the late third millennium Cal BC, a notable change was the increased proportion of cattle among domestic species, which may suggest a more sedentary lifestyle of the Majorcan communities. This could have been triggered by gradual demographic growth that called for more clearly defined territorial limits. The implication is that agriculture was an important part of subsistence, but there is no direct evidence to confirm this.

The number of cattle as a percentage of total livestock reached around 25% by the late second millennium Cal BC. Pig also increased from 2% to 6%, but there exist large variations between sites. These changes are matched by a significant relative decrease of sheep and goats (from 95% to 69%).

A decrease in animal size is another aspect of this development from an evolutionary point of view (Table 3.3). The height of sheep in the late third-millennium assemblages of Ca na Cotxera (lower layer) and Coval Simó was about 61–63 cm, but the average size of these animals was just about 54 cm in another context of the former site dated to the mid-second millennium Cal BC. This is similar to the size of goats at Canyamel. The open-air site of Ca na Cotxera is particularly striking, as sheep in the lower strata measure

around 61 cm, but those from the mid-second millennium assemblage average no more than 53.8 cm.

Table 3.3. Size of ovicaprines and cattle in Bronze Age Majorca and Menorca.

	Site	Chronology	n	Size average ± SD (cm)
Sheep	Ca na Cotxera (Lower or C layer)	Late third millennium Cal BC	3	61.0 ± 1.4
Coval Simó	Late third millennium Cal BC		5	62.8 ± 2.9
Ca na Cotxera (Mid or B layer)	Mid-second millennium Cal BC		7	53.8 ± 3.3
Cala Blanca	Mid-second millennium Cal BC		18	49.6 ± 3.2
Goat	Cala Blanca	Mid-second millennium Cal BC	4	59.9 ± 1.9
Canyamel	Late second millennium Cal BC		3	54.1 ± 3.4
Cattle	Cala Blanca	Mid-second millennium Cal BC	2	87.4 ± 1.1

Factors driving the decrease in size include a stronger human pressure on the environment due to a progressively

increasing population count, which led to reduced feeding of livestock, which in turn favoured smaller animals. In all these cases, it is clear from the mortality profiles of the various domestic species that management strategies were not motivated by exploitation of secondary products but focused primarily on producing meat and primary resources. It should be kept in mind, however, that these averages are based on identified specimens and that they do not reflect the potential contribution of each domestic species to human consumption. On the contrary, cattle would have provided about 75% of all meat available for consumption in Late Bronze Age Cova des Moro, with the remainder coming from roughly equal amounts of pigs and ovicaprines. The inhabitants of Es Figueral de Son Real ideally obtained 60% of the meat from cattle, 25% from sheep and goats and 15% from pigs.

To conclude, the evidence shows significant diversification of animal husbandry. It began with the domestic species initially introduced to the island but at more balanced proportions, as is most evident when the two periods are compared. An average of 60–67% of ovicaprines (based on NISP) nevertheless remains very high in the west Mediterranean.

For Menorca, the evidence is more limited, as the first large faunal analysis for the Bronze Age has only recently been realised (Ramis and Anglada 2012). It is based on a collection of 1377 identified specimens from the habitation *naveta* of Cala Blanca that was excavated between 1986 and 1993 (Juan and Plantalamor 1997) (Figure 3.5). Two radiocarbon dates situate the context around the middle of the second millennium Cal BC (Plantalamor and Van Strydonck 1997). These results are quite similar to those for Late Bronze Age assemblages from Majorca, as they show a marked prevalence of domestic taxa, with 59% of ovicaprines, 34% of cattle and 7% of pig (based on NISP). The only wild species recorded is the cormorant (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) that is represented by six specimens. The ages at death of the herbivores (ovicaprines and cattles) do not suggest specialisation in secondary

products but point to mixed stockbreeding, that is, exploitation of both meat and secondary products. The kill-off pattern for pigs shows a dominance of two-year-old animals, which is very similar to the ones recorded in the Majorcan assemblages.

The Cala Blanca assemblage includes a relatively large number of whole sheep and goat bones, whose measurements have yielded a height average for sheep of 49.6 cm that are interestingly 10 cm smaller than goats at 59.9 cm. Cattle at Cala Blanca were relatively small, too, measuring on average 87.4 cm (based on two specimens). There are no cattle-size data for the early Majorcan assemblages because the bones are too fragmentary.

In Formentera, finally, a faunal assemblage has been recovered from the site of Cova des Riuets, which can be dated to ca. 2000 Cal BC (Marlasca 2008). Its composition is, however, very different from that of the Majorcan and Menorcan collections. First of all, it includes nearly 400 shellfish fragments and 852 fish remains (Marlasca 2008; 2010). Second, the terrestrial fauna is made up of the same taxa as identified in Majorca and Menorca (López-Garí *et al.* 2013). On the basis of 2176 identified specimens, ovicaprines represent 95% of the assemblage (with similar proportions of sheep and goat), and the remaining 5% includes roughly equal amounts of cattle (2.3%) and pig (2.9%). What is most remarkable, especially in comparison with other Balearic assemblages, is the large quantity of bird remains – 1447 avian specimens. They are heavily dominated by the endemic Balearic shearwater (*Puffinus balearicus*), which makes up 71%, with almost 55% of these belonging to juvenile specimens. The other main avian taxa are passerines (20%), Cory's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*: 4.2%), barn owl (*Tyto alba*: 1.9%) and rock pigeon (*Columba livia*: 1.8%). The Cova des Riuets has also yielded about 500 fragments of eggshells, probably belonging to the Balearic shearwater, which incidentally still nests in the cliffs where Cova des Riuets is situated.

Islands of Shepherds

The main islands of the Balearic archipelago were colonised by people roughly simultaneously around the mid-third millennium Cal BC. After an initial period of settlement, which may have lasted until the end of the millennium, the Balearic communities became isolated and remained so during most of the Bronze Age.

Information to reconstruct productive and subsistence strategies for this period is still rather limited, but, as Cherry (1984: 11) has pointed out, 'to imagine that truth will somehow emerge when more data are in hand is naive: it is better to get on with the job of trying to make sense of what we now know'. In that spirit, I have tentatively outlined scenarios of human adaptation to the specific environments of each island, drawing in particular on two key aspects of the cultural dynamics in the early prehistoric Balearics: mineral exploitation and circulation and archaeozoology.

In general terms, it is clear that animal management strategies were based on the traditional domestic mammals of the Mediterranean Neolithic and that they were very conservative throughout the Bronze Age. Animal husbandry in Majorca nevertheless shows a number of notable features. One is that livestock was initially narrowly focused on ovicaprines, which is unparalleled in the neighbouring regions, where sheep and goat are the dominant species but never in such high proportions (Ramis 2006). Even in Chalcolithic and Bronze Age assemblages from Corsica (Vigne 1988) and Sardinia (Fonzo 1987; Webster 1996; Delussu 1997), cattle and pig are more common than in Early Bronze Age contexts from Majorca. The specialisation in ovicaprine husbandry on Majorca could be interpreted as the result of an initially small but highly mobile population.

During the middle and late second millennium Cal BC, population numbers increased substantially in Majorca and Menorca, as is suggested by large numbers of new open-air sites (*navetes* villages), and animal management strategies were adapted to the local landscape and the increasingly restricted territories available to communities. Increasing numbers of cattle have been recorded for this period, which presumably went hand in hand with a more sedentary

lifestyle of the communities. At the same time, as the quality of animal feed declined, it gave goats an advantage over sheep. The case of Cala Blanca shows that the reduction in size was especially marked in sheep on Menorca around the middle of the second millennium Cal BC.

The animal management strategies denote very conservative behaviour by Balearic communities who did not exploit wild resources presumably for cultural reasons. Current evidence suggests that fishing off the northwestern Mediterranean mainland coasts was very limited during the Middle and Late Neolithic (e.g. Bosch *et al.* 1999; Craig *et al.* 2006; Garcia Guixé 2006).

This pattern only changes in an extreme environment, such as that of the small island of Formentera. The excavation in Cova des Riuets shows a remarkable interest in wild resources such as fish and seabirds (Marlasca 2008; López-Garí *et al.* 2013). The stable isotope analyses of prehistoric populations of the Balearic Islands confirm these data, as they testify to a fully terrestrial diet, with the exception of the single case of individuals buried in the megalithic tomb of Ca na Costa on Formentera (Van Strydonck *et al.* 2002; 2005b). Fishing, bird hunting and egg harvesting were clearly part of the faunal exploitation strategies in Formentera in the early second millennium Cal BC, while they were practically unknown in Bronze Age Majorca and Menorca.

Faunal analyses have shown varying responses to different environments by communities with similar cultural traditions, but animal management strategies in Majorca and Menorca continued to be very conservative until the Late Iron Age. It is only at that stage, possibly under Punic influence, that major changes are recorded. These include both the introduction of new species such as horse, donkey, fowl and land snails, and changes in economic strategies of animal exploitation such as fishing and the consumption of dog (Hernández-Gasch *et al.* 2011).

It is evident that Majorca and Menorca were regularly connected during the Early and Middle Bronze Age, but

there is at the same time very little evidence for external contacts beyond the archipelago. In the Late Bronze Age, the Balearic Islands were only marginally plugged into the exchange network of the west Mediterranean, presumably because the Balearic Islands had little to offer to prehistoric navigators beyond their geographic position.

The information discussed in this chapter also contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the major transformation of Balearic prehistory that heralds the so-called Talayotic period in Majorca and Menorca and that is not only defined by more complex social organisation but is also characterised by as many similarities as differences between the two islands. The evidence points to two processes underway in the Late Bronze Age: a demographic growth and a slight increase in the external contacts, which in all likelihood played a major part in the cultural transformation of Majorca and Menorca (Figure 3.6).



Figure 3.6. *Talayot* of Cornia Nou in east Menorca. The cyclopean building attached to the south side of the monument has been excavated by a team of the Museu de Menorca, bringing to light a large concentration of domestic animal bones, crops and tools (millstones, pebbles, bone awls). This monument is interpreted as a place for storage and processing food and other resources. It marks an important change from the self-sufficient economy of the early second millennium Cal BC. Photograph courtesy of the Museu de Menorca.

Acknowledgements

This chapter has benefitted from comments and suggestions kindly provided by Bernard Knapp, Peter van Dommelen, Marcos Llobera and Susan Gray.

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4 Islands and Mobility: Exploring Bronze Age Connectivity in the South-Central Mediterranean

Davide Tanasi and Nicholas C. Vella

Abstract

Prehistorians working in the Mediterranean have long realised that islands have been central to human mobility from early times. Indeed, the traditional focus on material culture studies, in particular regional and island-group typologies and chronologies, was borne out of the need to understand processes of culture change. Using the concept of the ‘maritory’, this chapter identifies three major cycles of object/human/knowledge mobility that characterise the island worlds of the south-central Mediterranean in the course of the Bronze Age. The social significance of interaction by coastal communities living on either side of a tract of sea is explored.

Never as in the last decade has the call been clearer: the history of the Mediterranean is the history of interaction, of the mobility of goods and people and above all connectivity – that low-level interaction between micro-regions over the *longue durée*. So much can be gleaned from contributions which cross-cut different specialisations in the social and political sciences (e.g. Cooke [1999](#); Horden and Purcell [2000](#); Sant Cassia and Schäfer [2005](#); Caletrió Garcerá and Ribera Fumaz [2007](#)). Mobility, not only for the Mediterranean at any given time, is being considered an

emerging paradigm within the social sciences (Sheller and Urry 2006), and a separate area of study with its own journal (Hannam *et al.* 2006). The timing coincides with the European Union's interest in the phenomenon of human migration, a theme supported by its framework programme *Culture 2000* which sponsored the project called *Crossings: Movements of People and Movement of Cultures – Changes in the Mediterranean from Ancient to Modern Times* (Antoniadou and Pace 2007). Central to this interest in movement is the belief that 'radical mobility is not a phenomenon of the twenty-first century alone but is a key constituent element of human life in all periods'. These are the words that appear on the back page of a book by Stephen Greenblatt, who has recently written a manifesto of mobility studies (Greenblatt 2010). The manifesto reacts to the way in which disciplines have largely apprehended cultures as local, where rootedness is often seen as the necessary condition for a robust cultural identity.

It is doubtful whether archaeologists have ever shied away from the considerations raised in the manifesto (Greenblatt 2010: 250–53). Indeed, for prehistorians, mobility has often been a *sine qua non* for understanding processes of culture change, even when the vectors of that movement – whether persons, objects or knowledge traditions – have not all been afforded equal deliberation (Cummings and Johnston 2007: 1; Knapp and van Dommelen 2010). In understanding prehistoric mobility, Mediterranean islands have often been favoured in investigations because their geomorphology and location have been central to connectivity from the earliest periods of long-distance communication. And in more recent years, the strict distinction, on which archaeologists studying islands have often insisted, between geographical isolation and cultural distinctiveness has been rethought, often as a result of attempts to move beyond disciplinary boundaries if not intellectual isolation (Broodbank 2000; Knapp 2008: 13–30). Restrictions of space do not allow us to show how knowledge about ancient objects and sites is often begotten by evocations of mobility as well as actual travel. A case can be made, however, that particular spaces and modern spatialities have impacted upon the formulation of

theories and historical narratives of ancient mobility in the south-central Mediterranean, in particular the island of Sicily and the smaller island groups that surround it. The cue comes from recent work on the geography of scientific knowledge, where importance is given to the roles played by space and place in the production, consumption and circulation of knowledge (Livingstone 2005). Many Mediterranean islands stimulated ideas about the remote past and were important for the development of an idea of prehistory (Leighton 1989). Indeed, several south-central Mediterranean islands also became an integral part of a knowledge-scape of European antiquarianism, facilitated by the unprecedented explosion in mobility of travellers that took the Early Modern period by storm (Freller 2008; 2009). This can be inferred, for example, from the role played by the Maltese megalithic monuments in the history of archaeological thought (in part explored in Vella and Gilkes 2001; Malone and Stoddart 2004; Pessina and Vella 2009). In all cases, prehistoric connections between places and across space have often been conceived and represented over the years by those scholars – young archaeologists and seasoned fieldworkers – whose research was essentially done during a journey or at the end of one. After the disarray caused by the radiocarbon revolution (Renfrew 1973), theoretical debates have sought to understand the significance of transinsular distribution of artefact styles, or indeed the lack of such distributions, as signifiers of social practices. In this debate, little attempt has been made to comprehend what happened in the south-central Mediterranean after the middle of the third millennium BC when Malta's so-called Temple period ended, even if important issues are at stake (Cazzella *et al.* 2007). This chapter explores the degree, extent and social significance of material connections between the island worlds of the south-central Mediterranean in the Bronze Age.

Cycles of Mobility in the Bronze Age

Longue Durée

At the risk of stating the obvious, we start by reiterating two

important points. Of all the ways that islands make a difference in a study about ancient human mobility, two are the most important: first, that throughout prehistory, contact between the island group of the central Mediterranean and the rest of the world was *entirely* through the medium of maritime connections; second, that the sea was the medium which could both isolate the islanders from and bring them into contact with their closest neighbours. For the south-central Mediterranean ([Figure 4.1](#)), the island chains and archipelagos (Aeolian, Egadi, Pelagic, Maltese), some within sight of each other or the main island (Sicily) and peninsular Italy, enabled maritime exploration from an early date ([Dawson 2007](#)), overcoming the complex combinations of winds, currents and tides along the different tracts of coast ([Tichy 2001](#): 203). In considering the degree and nature of the connectedness for the islands of the central Mediterranean in the third and second millennia BC, we are faced with quite a few problems. The first difficulty is related to an assessment of seacraft technology; the second emanates from a severe lack of systematic provenance analyses on objects, such as pottery, for example; the third arises from a general lack of studies which assess the subsistence base and nutritional needs of the islanders; and the fourth relates to the underestimation of the maritime conditions which hamper mobility in the seas and channels around Sicily and its islands (routes drawn on maps – e.g. [Militello 2004](#): fig. 13; [Blakolmer 2005](#): 659; [Marazzi and Tusa 2005](#): pl. 42 – would be inconceivable without steam or diesel engine). So, although it is possible to distinguish at a general level the movement of artefacts or artefact styles across bodies of water, in the best of cases, the scale and intensity of the maritime encounters involved is more difficult to discern ([Manning and Hulin 2005](#)). Direct evidence for seacraft technology, for instance, is lacking for the central Mediterranean, but indirect evidence from Sicily and elsewhere, recently reviewed by [Broodbank \(2010\)](#), suggests that the uptake of sail technology did not occur before the second half of the second millennium BC. Earlier, longboats – paddled and oared – with high prows may have been common, sturdy enough to carry humans and cargoes

over the seas. Available technology coupled with the availability of resources, including access to trees of the right size (presumably from Sicilian woodland – cf. Sadori and Narcisi 2001), would, of course, have impacted upon the extent of the zones of maritime trade and interaction. But there were other factors too that go beyond the ecological, specialist workforces most especially, covering the whole gamut of skills required from woodworking to wayfinding at sea.



Figure 4.1. The Sicilian archipelago – Sicily, the Aeolian Islands, Ustica, the Egadi Islands, Pantelleria, the Pelagic Islands, the Maltese Islands, together with other sites mentioned in the text: 1. Monte San Paolillo; 2. Barriera di Catania; 3. Metapiccola; 4. Molino della Badia; 5. Montagna di Caltagirone; 6. Cittadella di Morgantina; 7. Sabucina; 8. Manfria; 9. Sant’Angelo Muxaro. Summer weather patterns for the south-central Mediterranean are shown (after Heikell 2006). Drawing by Maxine Anastasi.

Departing from the view that seafaring constitutes in itself social action (Farr 2006), we feel that the concept of the ‘maritory’, as proposed by Needham (2009), can allow us to structure our discussion of the cycles of mobility that can be defined for the central Mediterranean Bronze Age using the available archaeological evidence. A maritory is a geographic system related to a specific tract of sea or channel within which *shared* and *reciprocal* interests among participating communities can develop. As Needham argues, the emphasis is not on rigidly bounded entities or culture zones, but spheres where high-flux maritime interaction can be discerned. Ours is not a matter of adding a new term to existing debates but a way of highlighting and, when archaeological evidence permits, understanding the social reasons for mobility. For Sicily, in particular, with its settlement distribution conditioned by proximity to the sea for the whole of later prehistory (Leighton 2005: 274), we believe that the concept is particularly apt for our discussion. We propose considering three principal cycles of mobility that touch on the central Mediterranean over the *longue durée*, conscious of the fact that the difficulty to pigeonhole archaeological data and processes in neat periodisation schemes should assist constructive generalisations (Table 4.1): first, restraining mobility followed by divergence in the Early Bronze Age (ca. 2200–1450 BC); second, escalating mobility in the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 1450–1250 BC); and third, restraint and mobility in the extended Late Bronze Age (ca. 1250–850 BC).

Table 4.1. Chronological table for Sicily, Malta, southern Italy and the Aegean

Years BC	Sicily	Malta	S. Italy	Aegean
2200			Palma Campana	Middle Helladic
1700				
1600	Early Bronze Age	Castelluccio (II A)		Dark Ages

			Middle Bronze Age 1–2 (Protoappennine)	
1550		Capo Graziano		Late Helladic I–II
1440– 1420		Thapsos Borġ in- I Nadur (II B1)		
1440–		Milazzese I	Middle Bronze Age 3 (Appennine)	Late Helladic IIIA1
1380		Thapsos II		
1350	Middle Bronze Age			
1310–		Milazzese II		Late Helladic IIIA2
1300		Thapsos III		
			Recent Bronze Age 1 (Subappennine)	Late Helladic IIIB1
1270–		Milazzese III		
1250		Pantalica I		Late Helladic IIIB2
		(Pantalica) Borġ in- Nord – Nadur Mont. (II B2) Caltagirone)	Recent Bronze Age 2 (Protovillanovian)	
1180		Ausonio I		

1150	Late Bronze Age (<i>Bronzo Tardo</i>)	Pantalica II (Pantalica Nord – Mont. Caltagirone)	Final Bronze Age 1–2 (Protovillanovian)	Late Helladic IIIC (Protovillanovian)
1050		Ausonio I	Final Bronze Age 3 (Protovillanovian)	Submycenaean
900		Pantalica III		Protogeometric
850	Late Bronze Age (<i>Bronzo Finale</i>)	(Cassibile) Ausonio II	Porġ in- Nadur (II B3)	I Iron Age 1a (Villanovian)
			I Iron Age 1b (Villanovian)	Early Geometric Middle Geometric
750	Early Iron Age	Pantalica IV (Pantalica South)	Baħrija (II C)	
			I Iron Age 2a– b (Villanovian)	Late Geometric

Restraining Mobility Followed by Divergence in the Early Bronze Age (ca. 2200–1550 BC)

About 4500 years ago, the Maltese Islands were experiencing the tail end of a process that had started about a millennium earlier and which had set the archipelago on a path of development very different from what was happening in Sicily and peninsular Italy. The hard archaeological evidence for this ‘development of difference’

(Robb 2007: 331) consists of the Late Neolithic megalithic buildings and communal burial sites of Malta and Gozo with their particular architectural layout, singular pottery styles and peculiar figurine traditions. In social terms, this difference would imply the existence of a level of complexity based on a ritual-regulated mode of social reproduction vested in leaders responsible for restricting mobility and access to foreign resources, if not knowledge traditions associated with their procurement and transformation. Such resources included flint and obsidian (Tykot 1996; C. Vella 2008), ochre (Maniscalco 1989) and greenstone (Leighton and Dixon 1992; Skeates 1995), basalt, alabaster, marble, pumice and volcanic rock (Brown *et al.* 1995). These substances originated in specific areas, either on volcanic islands (Pantelleria, Lipari) or mountain ranges along eastern Sicily or the Calabrian peninsula (Monti Iblei, Etna, northeast Sicily for basalts, Calabria for greenstones) – all recognisable seamarks in their own right by their shape, height and colour and, therefore, essential for wayfinding along different stretches of sea (as understood by Ingold 2000: 219–42; cf. Arnaud 2008) (Figure 4.2a). Such resources were transformed in several ways, even if we can only identify a few of them. Productive technology would appear to have become a key factor in the development of social complexity. Both actions of procurement *and* transformation, over and above colour, texture and translucency of the material, could have imbued these resources and objects with special significance at their destination. Ethnographic studies (Helms 1988; 1993; Gell 1992) would support these readings and ‘map on’ the recent proposition that the megalithic structures where most of these materials were deposited could be understood as ‘repositories of knowledge traditions’ (Turnbull 2002). Together with the south Italian greenstone, one type of pottery suggests that Malta, directly or indirectly, was drawn into a larger interaction zone than the smaller ones centred around Sicily and its offshore islands, and which may have been located around the Adriatic and the Dalmatian coast: this is a pottery style that goes by the name of ‘Thermi ware’ and that is characterised by a design of alternating triangles

with pitted decoration on a thickened internal lip, known in the Aegean and the western Balkans before the mid-third millennium BC (cf. Maran 2007; Palio 2008) (Figure 4.3a). This type of pottery, which may have reached the central Mediterranean around 2300 BC (Cazzella 2003), and is plentiful on the present islet of Ognina to the south of Syracuse (Figure 4.1), where it was first recognised by Bernabò Brea (1966; 1976–77; Trump 2004–2005), has been recovered in Temple-period contexts in Malta (Trump *et al.* 2009: 239). Here it seems to have been made using local clay, if we go by the results of recent analyses (Mommsen *et al.* 2006). The clearest example – a pedestalled bowl with characteristic lip (Figure 4.3a: 3) – was found hidden behind a monumental altar at the Tarxien temples (Evans 1971: 221). As with other material found in Temple-period contexts that was concealed from view in pits and below floors or thresholds (N. Vella 2007: 68–70), it is possible that secrecy overrode public access. In this context, arguing that the Maltese Islands formed part of a Copper Age maritimity would be fortuitous. In its ‘difference’, the Maltese story is about insularity and restraining access to ritualised knowledge, begotten by cross-channel mobility.

No sites in the Maltese archipelago have been clearly dated to the period between 2400–2000 BC (Malone *et al.* 2009). Indeed, the nature of the transition between the Late Neolithic Temple period and the Early Bronze Age is far from clear, with population replacement theories remaining a favourite (cf. Bonanno 1993; Leighton 1999: 137; Trump 2002: 238–41; Pace 2004). The transformation of several megalithic sites (e.g. Bonanno 1999; Recchia 2004–2005), the introduction of cremation as a communal burial rite and the use of the dolmen (Evans 1956b), the adoption of richly incised monochrome pottery (Evans 1971: 224–25), and the use of copper (Maniscalco 2000) all herald a new era for the Maltese Islands and evoke what is happening in certain parts of Sicily, its islands and beyond. The material signposts point eastward, towards the Balkans, the Aegean and finally Anatolia, with a singular diagnostic element being peculiar plaques of bone with a row of bosses on one side, often richly decorated, like the examples from Castelluccio-phase

contexts in Sicily, but sometimes plain, like the example from the Tarxien Cemetery in Malta (Evans 1956a; Maran 2007: 14–18).

Towards the end of the third millennium BC, the Maltese Islands re-enter the fold of a common central Mediterranean cultural matrix. That matrix is complex, however, made up of layers of small, local differences in material culture, the understanding of which must have depended on indigenous knowledge or knowledge shared between different areas. It is difficult to determine whether these interaction zones imply a maritory, in other words, whether communities on either side of a tract of sea, or along a coastal route, were acting within clear organisation and ideological structures and were both getting out of the system what they most sought in social terms. Much of western and central Sicily probably did, and came to form part of a maritory with clear roots in the preceding millennium and links to Sardinia (Leighton 1999: 111; Cazzella 2000), where pottery of the Beaker tradition has been taken to imply shared codes of social conduct and value (Barfield 1994; Tusa 1997a). Such shared codes were possibly based on marriage alliances at the local level (Vander Linden 2007) rather than on control over the acquisition of mineral resources, missing, for instance, in western Sicily (Giannitrapani 2009: 240). Maritime interaction can be identified for this *facies* (Castelluccio in Sicily and Capo Graziano in the Aeolian isles; Tarxien Cemetery in Malta) on the basis of shared elements in the material culture. In southeast Sicily, the occurrence of rock-cut tombs bearing carved facades of semi-columns with engravings, and at least in two cases (at Castelluccio) with doors closed by spiral-decorated stone slabs, have been taken to imply a funerary megalithism in miniature. This architectural idiom would have been inspired by the Maltese megalithic temples, if not built by the temple builders who left the island and sought refuge in southeast Sicily (Cultraro 2000; Terranova 2008). The significance of that connection over and above vague formal similarities has, however, been questioned (Bonanno 2008: 32). Figurative representations in terracotta, either anthropomorphic (from Monte San Giuliano at Caltanissetta)

or disc-like (from Manfria and Catania Barriera), recall similar examples from the cemetery at Tarxien (Giannitrapani 1997; Guzzone 2005: 46). Movement of mineral resources from southern Sicily is also inferred by the discovery of sulphur – a multi-purpose mineral (La Rosa 2005: 574–75) – recovered in small quantities among burials at the cemetery inside the megalithic complex of Tarxien on Malta (Zammit 1930: 59–60). The source is probably Monte Grande at Palma di Montechiaro, which appears to have served, with its coastal enclave, as a gateway community for pre-Mycenaean Aegean prospectors (Castellana 1999).

One diagnostic element of material culture, however, really provides a glimpse into the maritime worlds of which the eastern part of Sicily came to form part. The pottery that accompanied the cremation burials at Tarxien, especially the helmet-shaped bowls with incised decoration around the base of the handle (Figure 4.3a: 5, 7), is typologically similar to pottery from the village at Capo Graziano, the easternmost and most prominent tip of the tiny Aeolian island of Filicudi (Evans 1971: 149–66). Similarities with the late EH III examples in the Aegean have been sought on the basis of material retrieved from Altis in Olympia (Cazzella 2003: 562; Cazzella *et al.* 2007: 247–48, fig. 3) (Figure 4.3a: 4, 6), and linked with a phenomenon of seafaring activities dubbed ‘Argonauts of the West Balkans’ (Maran 2007: 14). What the pottery shows us is how much the scattered island groups to the north and south of Sicily have in common with each other rather than with the Castelluccio culture in Sicily. This phenomenon has been remarked upon by Leighton (1999: 137) who posits different scenarios to explain the developments taking place on Filicudi. That some degree of human mobility was involved, however, cannot be doubted, and it would appear that we have at this time the rise of the island or coastal centre (Broodbank 2010: 252), placed off or along a stretch of mainland or quasi-mainland coast (as with Ognina, at this time a tip on a low promontory [Lena *et al.* 1988: 60–62], and far-off Malta, Gozo and Pantelleria), or at a nodal point among a cluster of islands (as with Filicudi) (La Rosa 2002). Whether for trading or other strategic purposes, activity was limited to the islands and the seaways

(Figure 4.2c). An inkling of the maritime mobility can be had from the recovery of pottery of Aeolian fabric on the island of Vivara off the Campanian coast (Cazzella *et al.* 1997) and of 67 pots of Capo Graziano type recovered from the seabed in the Bay of Lipari, probably lost off a boat (Ciabatti 1978; Bernabò Brea 1978; 1985: 48–52). Moreover, the Early Bronze Age village enclave at Viale dei Cipressi in Milazzo (Tigano 2009: 23–27) reminds us that a pocket of activity on the nearby northern coast of Sicily was required to facilitate maritime communications for those sailors who brought pottery from the Aegean to the Aeolian islands (Vianello 2005; also Levi *et al.* 2009: 67) through a tricky bit of sea (cf. Flesca 2002; Haslam 1978: 226–27).

Escalating Mobility in the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 1450–1250 BC)

It is in the context of contacts with the Aegean world and the expansion of its palace economies that the intensification of mobility and the increased sociopolitical sophistication that characterise the Middle Bronze Age of the south-central Mediterranean have to be seen. In the space of two centuries, seafaring activity, seemingly facilitated by the introduction of the sail (Broodbank 2010: 257), brought several sites on the *façade maritime* of eastern and southern Sicily in contact with the world of the Mycenaeans who ventured farther west at the time. Even though the scale of the contact is uncertain, ‘infrequent’ in Blake’s (2008) minimalist stance, the evidence for mobility is undeniable: pottery found in significant quantities in the areas of Syracuse (van Wijngaarden 2002: 229–36; Vianello 2005: 106–75) and Agrigento (De Miro 1999: 439–49; Castellana 2000); oxhide ingots (Thapsos: Lo Schiavo 2004: 1326–28; Ognina: Bernabò Brea 1966: 44–45; Cannatello: Lo Schiavo and Vagnetti 1989: 231); jewellery made from glass paste, stone, ivory, amber and gold (Militello 2004: 310–11); and at least one terracotta figurine of the ‘proto-phi’ type from Lipari (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1980: 176). It is thought that with objects came itinerant artisans and architects, but also ideas and values which are often translated into a

‘proto-urban’ layout for settlements such as Cannatello and Thapsos on Sicily and I Faraglioni on Ustica (De Miro 1999: 439–49; Doonan 2001: 177), *tholos* tombs for burial (Tomasello 2004), weaponry (La Rosa 2000: 125–38; Bettelli 2006: 240–45), and pottery and metal sets suitable for commensal feasting (Maniscalco 1999).

The cultural foci in this period are located in the two geographic zones that had determined the outcome of cultural processes in part already in the Early Bronze Age: the cluster of islands, including Ustica, in the southern part of the Tyrrhenian Sea, and the coastal area around Syracuse and Augusta with its series of low-lying headlands and marshes (Lena and Bongiovanni 2004) (Figures 4.2d and 4.4). Both foci have coastal configurations that favour maritime mobility (Broodbank 2006: 219, fig. 3).

On the southern tip of the island of Panarea, opposite Lipari, in the Aeolian archipelago, an agglomeration of huts was set on an eroded cliff-edged headland overlooking a small anchorage (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1968). Evidence of the same cultural *facies* that takes the name of the promontory, Milazzese, was found at similar settlements on far-off Ustica, again on a cliff edge at the site of I Faraglioni (Holloway and Lukesh 1995), on Salina above the rocky shore at Portella (Martinelli 2005), and on the Castello site at Lipari (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1980). A predilection for island settlements on positions with either natural defences or purpose-built landward walls, or a combination of the two, is apparent; the site of Mursia on Pantelleria (Tusa 1997b) fits into this ‘island world’, as it has been called (Leighton 1999: 157). Malta is drawn into the same seascape by virtue of several factors: first, the fortified settlement at Borġ in-Nadur, overlooking Marsaxlokk Bay, and similar ones elsewhere, including on Gozo (Evans 1971: 225–26), with ready access to the sea; second, by the characteristic red-slipped pottery of its eponymous *facies* (phase IIB1), which a recent survey has recorded at 10 sites (amounting to 66 whole pieces) along the eastern Sicilian littoral (Tanasi 2008b: 23–32, fig. 60) and at Monte San Paolillo near Catania where two pots of Borġ in-Nadur type

occur with two Mycenaean pieces of LH IIIA1–A2 date and a Baltic amber bead (Tanasi 2010: 87) (Figure 4.4). With the exception of these sites in Sicily, where the centennial tradition of preferring rock-cut funerary chambers continues, evidence of burial is otherwise lacking.

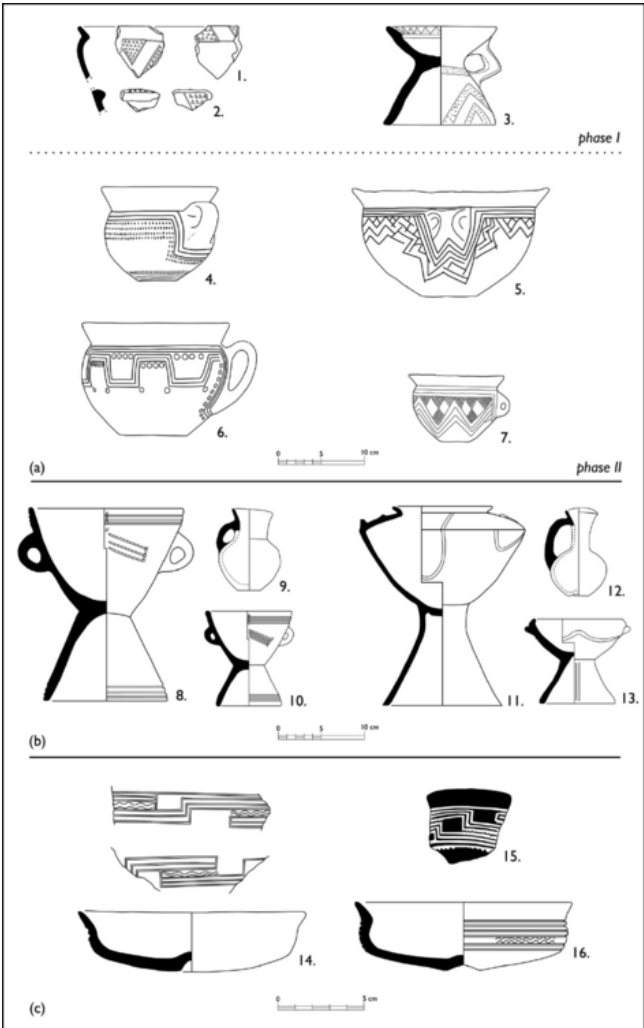


Figure 4.3. (a) EBA Aegean-central Mediterranean contacts in two hypothetical phases based on pottery styles (after Cazzella *et al.* 2007): 1. and 2. from Olympia, New Museum; 3. ‘Thermi ware’ from Tarxien; 4. and 6. from Olympia, Altis; 5. and 7. from Tarxien Cemetery. (b) Maltese and Sicilian Middle Bronze Age pottery set from tomb 23, Cozzo

del Pantano: 'Maltese' pieces: 8. inv. 11242; 9. inv. 11264; 10. inv. 11246; 'Sicilian' pieces: 11. inv. 11238; 12. inv. 11248; 13. inv. 11266 (drawings by C. Veca). (c) Late Bronze Age (*Bronzo Finale*) pottery from Sicily and Malta: 14. 'Proto-Elymian' bowl from Verderame (after Tusa 1992); 15. bowl fragment from Bahrija (after Peet 1910); 16. bowl from Bahrija, B/P.103 (drawn by D. Calì). Redrawn by Maxine Anastasi.

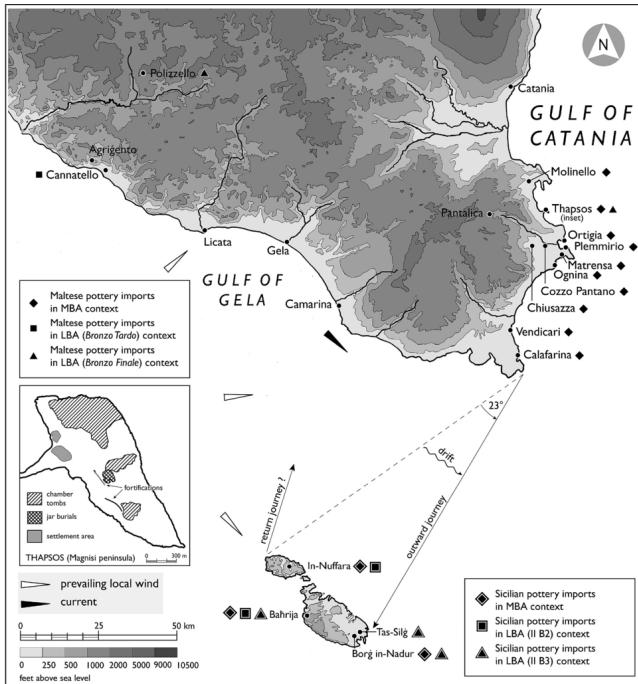


Figure 4.4. Distribution of Sicilian and Maltese Bronze Age pottery, identified macroscopically, together with other sites mentioned in the text. A hypothetical outward and return journey from Sicily to the Maltese Islands is included. Drawing by Maxine Anastasi.

At the coastal centre of Thapsos (Figure 4.4, inset), on the tip of the Magnisi peninsula, between Augusta and Syracuse, a different world beckons. Archaeologists distinguish three phases of use on Thapsos pegged to a Mycenaean chronological yardstick (Alberti 2007; Tanasi 2011b): the

first one (corresponding to LH IIIA1) characterised by a settlement of round and subcircular huts often accompanied by rectangular rooms set in compounds fronting a number of pathways; the second phase (LH IIIA2) marked by the construction of two buildings with a rectilinear arrangement of rooms around a paved area (the so-called complex A and complex B), located not far from the first; and the third one (LH IIIB) when both parts of the settlement were in use. Burial in the first two phases took place in three separate areas, with about 325 chamber tombs to the north of the residential zone, others between the settlement and the sea and about 20 jar burials in an isolated spot in the middle of the peninsula.

An exhaustive, contextual examination of the burial and settlement evidence has allowed archaeologists to shed some light on the social structure of the Thapsos community. Although Alberti (2006) concluded that this would have belonged to an incipient chiefdom type by the second phase of the site's history, no clear evidence for political stratification can be made out. Instead, the evidence marshalled may fit the level of a 'trans-egalitarian' society, where inequality is dependent on the dominant position sought in small groups by certain individuals (Tanasi 2008a: 168–70; Palermo *et al.* 2009: 55). The dominant position in this case is borne out of contact with 'foreignness', although other factors may have had a role too. Indeed, negating the possibility that Thapsos was a Mycenaean colony (also Militello 2004: 327–28; Blake 2008: 22), Alberti (2006) suggests that a restricted indigenous group would have had access to foreigners who were purveyors of knowledge related to metal crafts. These *may* have included Cypriots if we go by Cypriot-type Base Ring II and White Shaved pottery found in tombs in association with the so-called 'Thapsos rapier' for which a Cypriot origin has been claimed (D'Agata 1986: 105–106); but it is far from clear whether this pottery was produced in Sicily (Karageorghis 1995) or imported from the Levant (Vagnetti 2001a: 80; 2001b: 101) or, indeed, from Cyprus itself (Alberti 2006). Be that as it may, markers of values associated with status included not only items in metal, especially bronze, but also other types

of pottery: imports in the first phase of Thapsos' history, followed by copies in the subsequent phase. Potters copied Mycenaean forms which are absent in the first phase, vessels which in the Aegean were not used for 'domestic' purposes but only for special symposia-type gatherings. Alberti suggests that the prototypes would only have been seen by the members of the restricted group during special encounters where liquids would have been consumed from sets used for the purpose. Those sets also seem to have included Maltese or Maltese-type pottery (Vella *et al.* 2011: 272–73, tables 9.1, 9.2), in particular a two-handled bowl, an open-mouthed jug and a pedestalled basin (Figure 4.3b). In Malta, these occur together in a special area of the reused prehistoric temple at Borġ in-Nadur, referred to as 'Double Chapel' (Murray 1929: pl. 25; Tanasi 2008b: 77, fig. 59c), from where a fragment of a Mycenaean LH IIIA2–IIIB1 drinking cup (*kylix*) was recovered (Blakolmer 2005: 658). The set also occurs at Cozzo del Pantano (tomb 23) on the banks of the river Ciane (Tanasi 2011b: 292, table 10.2) and at coastal Matrensa (tomb 6: Tanasi 2008b: 40–49). The surface finish of the Maltese pottery (a highly polished red fabric: period IIB1) and the shape of certain types which seem to be imitating metal prototypes (Tanasi 2008b: 78) suggest that the choice of pottery vessels which arrived in Sicily was borne by a commitment to partake in a social network characterised by a new set of values (Tanasi 2011b: 302–308).

Alberti's suggestion that, at Thapsos, knowledge traditions associated with skilled crafting existed finds support in ethnographic work (Helms 1993) that does not trivialise information exchange (of the sort 'drinking enhances sociability') in ritual settings. It also shifts the emphasis from Mycenaean pottery considered in isolation (Blake 2008) to one where the acquisition and social rationing of knowledge associated with crafting and transacting by certain individuals or a group, related to spatially distant overseas realms, is given local agency. If those on either side of what ancient geographers called the 'Sicilian channel' between Sicily and the Peloponnese (Prontera 1996: 205) got what they wanted in social and political terms, as would appear to

be the case, even for Aegean prospectors who made eastern Sicily a compulsory staging-post, then we have a maritomy in the Bronze Age *longue durée*.

What remains to be explained is the role Malta may have played in the escalating mobility that characterises the Bronze Age in this period. This role has been downplayed by the insignificant number of foreign objects found on Malta, essentially the single Mycenaean sherd from Borġ in-Nadur just mentioned, and another one – of LH IIIB date – discovered in 2004 at the site of Tas-Silġ also overlooking Marsaxlokk Bay (Sagona 2008: 496, fig. 6.1). A recent ongoing study of the pottery held in the stores of the National Museum of Archaeology is, however, altering the picture. To date, 71 handmade sherds typical of Sicilian Middle Bronze Age pottery (especially Thapsos second and third phases) have been identified among material from the sites of Borġ in-Nadur (Murray's excavations; 42 sherds) and Baħrija, the impregnable site on the northwest coast of Malta excavated by T. E. Peet in 1909 (28 sherds; Tanasi 2010: 108), and from the hilltop site of In-Nuffara in central Gozo (one sherd; Tanasi 2011a: 148, fig. 4.52) (Figure 4.4). The pottery is handmade with a grey-brown burnished fabric containing *chamotte* and volcanic grit, with incised or applied decoration consisting of chevrons or rope-bands respectively. In two cases, the pot profile could be reconstructed and is comparable with the pedestal cups of the Thapsos *facies* (third phase) on Sicily and the carinated pedestal cups with incurving rim (Thapsos, second phase) common in the eastern and west-central parts of the island. In addition, the same Thapsos-type pottery has been recently identified at Tas-Silġ in Malta (northern enclosure; Recchia and Cazzella 2011: 388).

Furthermore, the argument that Maltese textiles, for which some evidence exists (Tanasi 2008b: 20), would not have been exchanged (Blakolmer 2005: 658–59) belittles the specialness that exotic drapery might have had in the eyes of the consumers (cf. Foxhall 1998: 304–305, for the Archaic period). Be that as it may, if we assume that one of the routes that took Mycenaeans west went along the south

coast of Sicily, as many contend (La Rosa 2005: 580; Marazzi and Tusa 2005: 607, pl. 148), then we need to factor in the difficulties of sailing beyond Sicily's southeastern cape from the east (Purdy 1826: 151; Arnaud 2008: 24–25; Freller 2009: 87–102). This would have first required heading 'out there' in the direction of the string of Maltese islands (which extend for about 23° on the horizon) before travelling northward with the prevailing northwesterly wind (Figure 4.4). Seacraft of the time appear to have been equipped with a brail rig and may have just about been able to proceed to windward (Wachsmann 1998: 251–54). Sicilian and Maltese islanders, in particular, who inhabited a fundamental seamark and waypoint, could have possessed the skill necessary to proceed westwards by boat in this manner. It is knowledge, we would like to argue, which lent the Maltese islanders a social position of relevance in the ritual gatherings of knowledge traditions in the huts at Thapsos.

Restraint and Regional Mobility in the Extended Late Bronze Age (ca. 1250–850 BC)

If knowledge about metallurgy and the use of metals had hitherto been rationed or restrained, it exploded in the course of the Late Bronze Age – *Bronzo Tardo* and *Bronzo Finale* in traditional Sicilian terminology (Table 4.1) – and the south-central Mediterranean appears to have been caught in the technology that made the world go round at the time (Pare 2000). This is evident from the distribution of finds, especially casting moulds found in settlements such as Cannatello and inland hilltop centres such as Sabucina, Pantalica and Morgantina (Albanese Procelli 1996). Furthermore, the increase in the number of settlements in the metalliferous zone of the Monti Peloritani in northeast Sicily is indicative of potential extraction already in the Late Bronze Age (Giardino 1996). All this happens while tumultuous events taking place beyond the eastern and northern horizons of Sicily altered established settlement and mobility patterns: coastal centres, such as Thapsos

(Alberti 2007; Tanasi 2009b), were abandoned, whereas coastal Cannatello had its fortification wall amplified, but the settlement was eventually destroyed, as was that of Mursia on Pantelleria (Ardesia *et al.* 2006). At the same time, the palatial system collapsed in the Aegean, resulting in restrained Mycenaean connections with the central Mediterranean, as reflected in the limited amount of LH IIIC sherds found in the Aeolian isles (Vianello 2005: 127–30). Luxury objects, however, did trickle into eastern and southern Sicily (Tanasi 2004), possibly with refugees, mercenaries or displaced groups, who appear to have provided prototypes for the production of imitation Mycenaean (LH IIB2–IIIC) vessels (Tanasi 2005). Moreover, successive movements of groups from Calabria in southern Italy have been linked to destructions in the same archipelago and the establishment only on Lipari of two new successive cultural horizons termed Ausonian I and II, derivatives of the Italian ‘Sub-Appennine’ culture (Bietti Sestieri 2003; this volume).

The effects of these movements on cultural developments in inland Sicily are hard to define, and the resulting culture zones, or regional systems, are fuzzy at the edges, both spatially and chronologically. During the period 1250 to 1050 BC, the culture of Pantalica North/Montagna di Caltagirone affects most of eastern Sicily, with hilltop sites becoming common for settlement and burial in rock-cut tombs prevailing along the often precipitous edges. Even if we dismiss any form of Mycenaean inspiration for the large rectangular edifice at Pantalica (Leighton 2011: 456 *contra* Tomasello 2004) that is ascribed to the Late Bronze Age date (Bernabò Brea 1990), it would be hard to explain the introduction of multi-chambered tombs in addition to the more common *tholos*-type burials without reference to Late Helladic prototypes (Tanasi 2004). Over the next 200 years, a fragmentation into a series of regional cultural systems, a so-called mixed *facies* displaying hybrid characteristics of peninsular and Sicilian traits is noted in east-central Sicily at Metapiccola, Molino della Badia/Madonna del Piano, Cittadella, which develops against a culture rooted in local tradition, termed Cassibile (Albanese Procelli 2003). In

central Sicily, around Agrigento, is a cultural tradition that recalls Thapsos in its heyday, associated in particular with the sites of Sant'Angelo Muxaro and Polizzello (Palermo 1996); and in west-central Sicily, encounters between Italic and local peoples give rise to a tradition defined as 'northern Ausonian' (Castellana 1992) and 'Proto-Elymian' (Tusa 1992).

Life on the Maltese islands would appear to have gone on in imperceptible rhythms of human response to a precarious islandscape. People were living in hilltop or promontory settlements with access to springs and fertile agricultural land, the produce of which was put away in rock-cut silos (Pace 2004: 226); the seaviews that the settlements commanded are a telling reminder that maritime interaction was not far off the islanders' minds. In fact, sufficient evidence can be marshalled to show how the islanders came to be part of the south-central Mediterranean mobility that picked up towards the close of the millennium (Figure 4.2e), possibly to mingle with the iron-carrying groups from peninsular Italy, who frequented if not actually resided on Thapsos (Albanese Procelli 2003: 99–100). The evidence consists of two ceramic data sets, some of which has been presented recently but which for the most part remains unpublished. The first one relates to Borġ in-Nadur type pottery in Sicily (periods IIB2 but mostly IIB3: Figure 4.4) at the coastal site of Cannatello near Agrigento, dating to about the mid-twelfth century BC (Vanzetti's intermediate phase II/III of the site). There are also 13 pots from resettled Thapsos dating to the tenth or ninth century BC (Alberti's [2007] Thapsos phase IV, Cassibile *facies*; Vella *et al.* 2011: 274, table 9.3) and a bowl from the inland site of Polizzello in west-central Sicily (first half of the ninth century BC; Vella *et al.* 2011: 274, table 9.3).

The second data set relates to 44 pottery imports of types that belong to the *facies* Pantalica North/Montagna di Caltagirone and Cassibile/Ausonian II recently identified by Tanasi amidst material held in the stores of the National Museum of Archaeology in Malta (Figure 4.4). This material comes from excavations in the settlement at Borġ in-Nadur

but some of it also comes from the site's reoccupied temple area, as well as that of Tas-Silġ, and from the settlement sites of Baħrija and In-Nuffara (Vella *et al.* 2011: 275, table 9.4). It is hard to assess the significance of the mobility patterns in this third cycle, largely because the recognisable pottery styles cannot be pinned down to specific areas, in particular those belonging to the Ausonian II *facies*. Eastern Sicily, however, especially the area around Catania, would appear to have acted as a focus if we go by the marked Maltese preference for imported strainer jugs, geometrically incised and highly polished red fabrics and triple-handled lids; these are all diagnostic elements that occur together at the site of Montagna di Caltagirone (Tanasi 2008a). Western Sicily, on the other hand, is drawn into the Maltese island-world by virtue of a type of pottery identified by Tusa (1992) at Verderame near Trapani and Segesta-Monte Barbaro. Dating to the first half of the ninth century BC, its decorative features – incised and impressed geometric designs including complex meanders and triangles (Figure 4.3c: 14) – have been linked to the region of Daunia in Puglia and find exact parallels in the advanced Borġ in-Nadur-style pottery production identified only at the site of Baħrija (Murray 1934) (Figure 4.3c: 15 and 16). Tusa (1992) has no doubt that a migratory group from Sicily would have brought this pottery style to Malta. The lack of contextual evidence, associated in particular with funerary rituals, from Malta for this period, however, does not allow us to associate such a pottery style with a foreign presence on the island (Arnold 2005).

It is clear that maritime interactions were nothing new towards the end of the second millennium BC. The key question is whether the small-scale maritime traffic that linked the different regions of Sicily and its offshore islands during the latter part of the Late Bronze Age can be defined as 'maritories'. On current evidence, we cannot assess how far those interactions may have acquired a pivotal role in determining social values for those communities living on either side of a channel or stretch of sea, or those in inland territories. The networks within which Sicily and the surrounding islands were caught up over the following five

centuries involved first of all Nuragic Sardinia (Lo Schiavo 2005) and possibly Iberia; later they included the Phoenician and Greek ones (Tanasi 2009a; Hodos, this volume). These are symptomatic of what Broodbank (2010: 258–59) has called ‘the shrinking of the Mediterranean’, brought about by the impact of the sailing ship with all the effects of that technology. Most particularly, perhaps, they brought formerly distant peoples and lifestyles together, carried bulk commodities rather than just valuables to far-flung ports and extended the margins of the ‘exotic’ farther away from the familiar to include the Atlantic coasts of Europe and Africa, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Conclusion: Mobility and South-Central Mediterranean Island Networks

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to understand the mobility that characterises the various south-central Mediterranean island groups over roughly two millennia. In spite of the broad brushstrokes that we have used to understand maritime interactions, certain patterns of island networks have clearly emerged. To conclude, we consider these patterns and their ramifications.

First, two millennia of archaeological time translate into cycles of maritime mobility centred around ‘nodes’ in several island networks (Figure 4.2). These formed out of the necessity to travel overseas, to identify convenient waypoints, to find safe anchorage and to seek food, water, resources and knowledge. These nodes are small islands such as Lipari, Filicudi, Ustica, Malta and Gozo with their coastal settlements, and near-islands such as prominent peninsulas like Thapsos and Ognina off and along the *façade maritime* of the largest landmass, which is the island of Sicily and with which different groups of islanders interacted. On occasion, islanders appear to have created insular networks which bypassed obvious coastal communities, as for example between Filicudi and Malta. These networks tend to have a deeper ancestry (Lipari and Pantelleria in the Neolithic, for example) and continued to exist in later periods when

islands served as extended hinterlands for other insular communities, who used them for pasture, collecting firewood and to obtain grain or even ice from the slopes of Mount Etna.

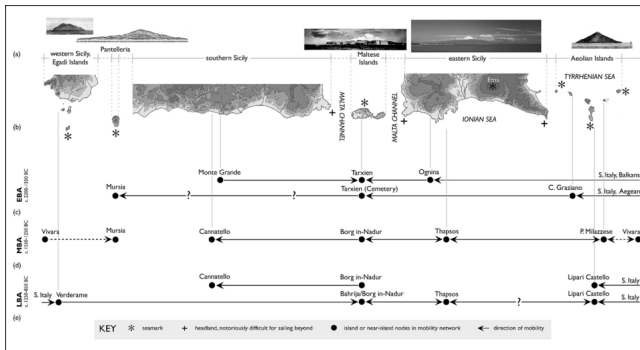


Figure 4.2. Cycles of mobility in the south-central Mediterranean in the Bronze Age: (a) landfall views of major seamounts; (b) the Sicilian maritime facades along the west, south and east coasts shown in the way they distend on the horizon to those approaching by sea; (c)–(e) travel linking island or near-island nodes in the Sicilian archipelago. Drawing by Maxine Anastasi.

Second, the islands and near-islands were often places where encounters with ‘foreignness’ brought by sea travel took place, whether through migration or prospection by smaller groups, because Sicily’s location on westward maritime routes cannot be underestimated. Understanding the effect of maritime connections in social terms is possible for Middle Bronze Age Thapsos for which it has been proposed that rationing exotic knowledge was important to regulate social reproduction, something which appears to have involved the Maltese islanders. It is also possible that the demarcation of Thapsos’s coastal edge with burials facing the sea was intentional as a way to mark the boundary of social, if not ideological, transformations through rituals involving the dead. But more research into the role played by a cosmological differentiation of the sea and the perceptual relations of islanders and coastal communities is required.

Third, we are aware that representations of islands are often a reflection of the complex relationship between spatial perceptions and historical circumstance. This can be illustrated, for instance, by the way the position of the Maltese Islands has been altered by different writers at different times: for Pseudo-Scylax and Hecateus, both writing in the fifth century BC, Gozo and Malta are African and defined in relation to Carthage; for the first-century BC writer Diodorus Siculus, Malta lies beyond that part of Sicily to the south; for the Latin author Ovid, Malta is lapped by the Libyan Sea; for the Renaissance cartographers of Ptolemy's *Geography*, the islands have to appear in a map of Europe. The physical position of Malta never changed of course, but the perceptions of mobile persons – seafarers, geographers and travellers – did change and often impinged on cartographic and historical endeavours that in turn mirror shifting political and ideological realities. We say this because we are aware that without written texts, it may be difficult to model the workings of an island network in detail over the long term. But material culture, once it has been recognised (often by mobile researchers), provenanced and its significance understood, can go a long way to provide an outline such as the one presented here to structure debates which we hope will follow.

Acknowledgements

We are especially grateful to the editors of the handbook, Peter van Dommelen and Bernard Knapp, for their patience when successive deadlines were not met and for their constructive feedback. Orazio Palio (Catania) kindly commented on an early draft. Part of the research carried out by one of us (D.T.) in Malta has been supported by a generous grant from the Institute of Aegean Prehistory (2010–11). At the National Museum of Archaeology (Malta), Sharon Sultana, Reuben Grima, MariaElena Zammit and Vanessa Ciantar have endured the multiple requests for assistance in recovering material with unflagging zeal; for this we are thankful. The results of this research, and additional work done since this chapter was written in 2010,

have been published in detail elsewhere (Tanasi and Vella 2011; 2014). This work was supported by grants from The Shelby White-Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications.

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5 Sicily in Mediterranean History in the Second Millennium BC

Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri

Abstract

This chapter stresses the critical role of the major Mediterranean islands as a connecting factor in the second millennium BC, as well as in the processes of integration between Aegean and Near Eastern seafarers and indigenous communities of the central Mediterranean. The focus is on Sicily and the Aeolian islands. In the Early Bronze Age (ca. 2200–1500/1450 BC), Sicily was culturally different from both mainland Italy and the Aeolian islands. The coasts of southern Italy and Sicily, and the adjacent small islands, participated in a wide system of seaborne trade, which provided the indigenous context to the earliest systematic sailings from the Aegean. The Middle Bronze Age (ca. 1500/1450–1250 BC) is characterized by the maximum intensity of sailings from the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean, and by cultural integration between the eastern seafarers and the indigenous communities. Sicily was now the territorial base for these activities, along with the Aeolian islands. The main evidence comes from the site of Thapsos. This change marked the end of the local system of coastal trade and the development of hostile relationships between the Sicilian and Aeolian groups and the indigenous communities of the southern Tyrrhenian regions. The Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age (ca. 1250–750 BC) saw the takeover of the Aeolian islands and of northeast Sicily by ‘Ausonian’ groups from continental Italy, which produced a systematic connection between Sicily and Lipari and southern

Italy, and a progressive advance towards central and southern Sicily. These local developments were among the reasons for the end of the Aegean presence and activity in the central Mediterranean.

Introduction

In a paper presented in 2000 at a conference at Lipari (Bietti Sestieri 2003; see also 2009), I proposed a model relating to the general perspective and material conditions of Mediterranean east–west interaction in the second millennium BC. The starting hypothesis, verified through the analysis of archaeological and historical data, was that the major Mediterranean islands (Crete, Cyprus, Sicily, Sardinia, Euboea) had been the main strategic factor in interaction processes. Rather than on a position of geographic determinism, the model depended on a close examination of the specific resources and opportunities which may be provided by major islands – as by any other natural and sociocultural environment –and on the different ways in which these were perceived and exploited. In other words, the model was not meant to establish the major islands as a universally valid category, but it referred specifically to the Mediterranean context and to the historical contingencies of the second millennium BC, especially in its eastern and central areas.

The following features and potentialities of the major Mediterranean islands were considered as especially significant in relation to this area and period:

1. Their overall size, comparable to the order of magnitude of a contemporary regional territory, which implies the availability of space and a wide range of different resources. This rules out the probability of destructive environmental crises, which is a structural factor on small islands.
2. Their virtually total accessibility, which constitutes a powerful incentive for external contacts and the ready integration of foreign people and groups.

3. Their autonomous cultural development (Patton 1996: 134–38), including from the adjacent mainland areas, and a marked trend of formal homogeneity, probably dependent upon a comparatively systematic transmission of information over the whole island territory.
4. A potential for the reception or autonomous elaboration of specific forms of sociopolitical complexity. This may be seen as a reconsideration of the well-known definition by Evans (1973) of islands as laboratories of culture change. Two conditions which might simplify and accelerate a regional trajectory towards social and political complexity are, on the one hand, a situation of cultural homogeneity and basically shared identity, and, on the other, a naturally bounded territory, a particular feature of all islands, compared to a mainland region, in which social and political transformations may be more easily delayed or effectively contrasted by the direct relationships with the adjacent regions.

This chapter deals with the specific forms of Sicily's interaction with Aegean and eastern Mediterranean groups who were consistently present and active in the central Mediterranean throughout the second millennium BC. The Aegean evidence is far more significant than eastern Mediterranean data, at least from a quantitative point of view. While the Aegean presence in mainland Italy was intensive from the seventeenth to sixteenth centuries BC, the connection with Sicily is structurally different and apparently more relevant from a strategic standpoint. In mainland Italy, especially in the southern regions, it is possible to identify a large number of localized Aegean presences from the earliest phase of systematic contact. From the Recent Bronze Age (fourteenth–thirteenth centuries BC), there is substantial evidence for the local production of Mycenaean and grey wheel-turned pottery. These were probably manufactured by Aegean artisans, whose techniques and formal models were almost completely alien to the local repertoire of handmade *impasto*

pottery. Analyses of the whole range of pottery classes have shown that the clays used for the manufacture of local and 'Aegean' vessels came from different locations. It also seems that Mycenaean vessels were not perceived as prestigious exotica, and they were generally not placed in important burials. In other words, the intensive Aegean presence in coastal southern Italy had a surprisingly limited impact on indigenous culture and lifestyle. Rather, it seems to have conformed to the local model of sociopolitical organization in relatively small kinship-based autonomous communities; its main goal was the participation in local exchange networks through integration within single communities. The two main exceptions to this trend are Scoglio del Tonno (Taranto), which was probably an indigenous emporion receiving metal and artefacts from northern and central Italy (Bietti Sestieri *et al.* 2010), and Roca Vecchia (Lecce), which apparently hosted a substantial Aegean population and participated in the Adriatic exchange system, connecting the eastern Mediterranean and Europe (Guglielmino and Pagliara 2010).

The starting hypothesis of this chapter is accordingly that the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean approach to Sicily was based on an acknowledgement of the islands' connectivity, i.e. of their potential as a privileged base for contact and integration, not unlike Crete and Cyprus in the eastern Mediterranean from the early second millennium BC. Aegean contact in Sicily is characterized by a specific combination of archaeological elements that is quite different from that in mainland Italy. Altogether, these involved the integration of formal and functional features of Aegean and east Mediterranean origin or inspiration into the local material culture, from pottery and bronze artefacts to settlement and funerary structures. In the Middle Bronze Age, this process is particularly evident at Thapsos, possibly the most important Sicilian site in this period. There are nevertheless also indications that the Mycenaean connection involved the island as a whole.

1. At the same time as the maximum intensity of the Aegean presence (LH IIIA2–IIIB) there is a radical

change and homogenization in material culture; and the new Thapsos–Milazzese culture is distributed over the whole of Sicily, with no significant local differences.

2. The one feature of funerary architecture which can be safely identified as depending on Aegean models – rock-cut cells imitating the shape of the tholos is found throughout Sicily ([Figure 5.13](#)).

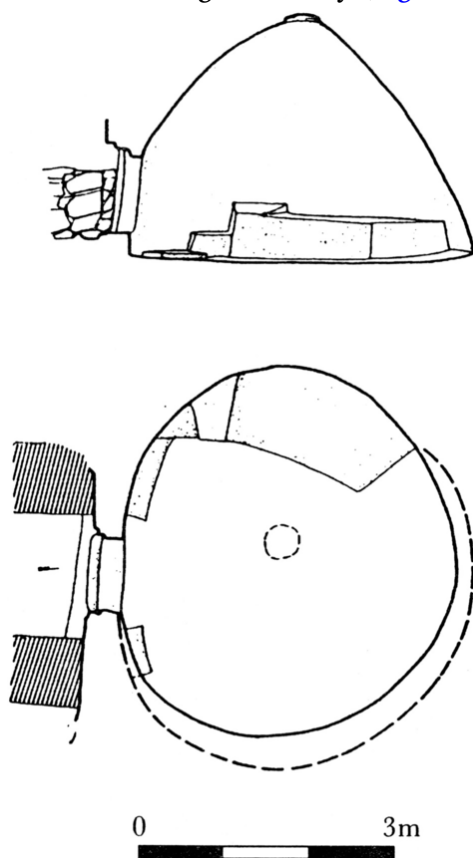


Figure 5.13. Section drawing of a rock-cut Late Bronze Age tholos tomb in the cemetery of Sant'Angelo Muxaro (Agrigento).

3. In clear contrast with the previous period, the homogeneity of material culture also involves the Aeolian islands. As we shall see in detail, throughout the Early Bronze Age, the archipelago was culturally

autonomous from Sicily, and in systematic contact with the southern Tyrrhenian regions of central Italy.

4. In the subsequent period (Late Bronze Age, early Pantalica culture, ca. thirteenth–eleventh centuries BC), the overall trend of integration of Aegean and local cultural features continues and becomes possibly even more clearly defined.

However, this does not imply that the process which involved Sicily was the result of an overall, strategically organized plan. More plausibly, it was progressively shaped by different contingencies and events, and by the emergence of political and organizational forms based on the integration of indigenous communities with Aegean–eastern Mediterranean groups systematically present in this area.

Equally relevant is the situation of the central Mediterranean from at least the late third to early second millennium BC (initial Early Bronze Age in the local chronology), at the time of earliest systematic sailing from the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean (ca. seventeenth–sixteenth centuries BC). Throughout this period, a combination of elements indicates the activity of a system of coastal trade, which involved the coasts and islands of this wide region. Based on present archaeological evidence, the core of the system was concentrated between southern Italy (probably along with the opposite eastern Adriatic coast) and Sicily, and included the minor islands and archipelagos as far south as Malta and Pantelleria. The sailings probably used small vessels that did not normally engage in long open-sea voyages. These kinds of trips were relatively easy in the area from the southern Tyrrhenian to the Ionian and southern Adriatic coasts, and concentrated in particular around the Aeolian and Maltese archipelagos. The main archaeological indicators are, first, the large number of sites established along the Adriatic and Ionian coasts of southern Italy in the early second millennium BC, and, second, a measure of formal homogeneity in the material culture (pottery) of coastal sites and small islands, which would signal increased interactions. The local Early Bronze Age

archaeological cultures that share significant formal features are those of Capo Graziano (Aeolian archipelago), Rodi-Tindari-Vallelunga (northern Sicily and the Tropea promontory of Calabria: [Figures 5.4](#) and [5.6](#)) and the Tarxien Cemetery (Malta). The main features of contemporary archaeological cultures (*facies*) of southern Italy (Palma Campania and Protoapennine), especially on the coast, are also rather close. Shared features of *impasto* pottery include specific shapes such as cups and bowls on a conical stand, stands made from opposed cones, and cups with high handles and axe-shaped extensions on the rim or handle of open vessels. Decorations are either modelled or engraved patterns; painting is totally absent. There thus exists a notable difference with the Sicilian Castelluccio *facies* that is defined by matt-painted pottery ([Figure 5.3](#)). Goods circulating through this network may have included raw metals and metal artefacts from Tuscany and northern Italy, probably along with perishable matters and products. A possible hint of this is found in the purple working in the early Protoapennine levels (beginning of the second millennium BC) at Coppa Nevigata on the Apulian coast (Cazzella [2009](#)). It seems likely that the earliest systematic approaches from the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean were first experimented and then consolidated through participation in local trade networks, which may be described as an open, acephalous system.

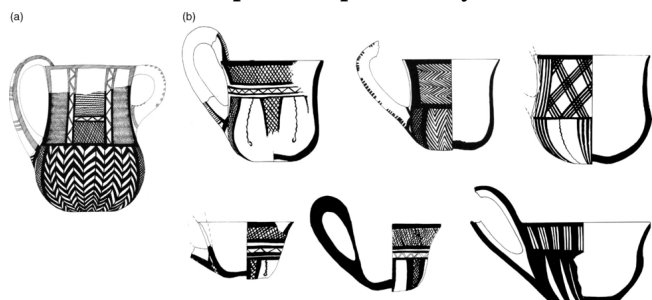


Figure 5.3. Early Bronze Age matt-painted Castelluccio pottery from the village and sanctuary of La Muculufa: a: amphora; b: cups (after Holloway *et al.* [1999](#): figs 51; 40; 43a, b, d; 44b; and 46).

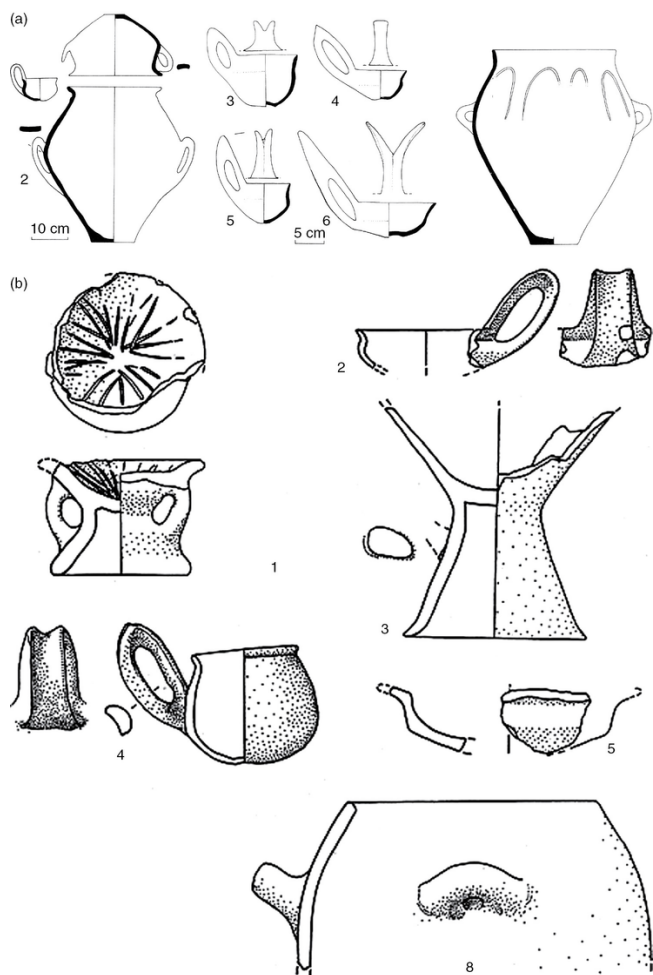


Figure 5.4. Early Bronze Age Rodi-Tindari-Vallelunga pottery from Sicily (a: after Leighton [1999](#): fig. 61) and Tropea, southern Calabria (b: after Pacciarelli and Varricchio [2004](#): figs 1, 3 and 4) (not to scale).

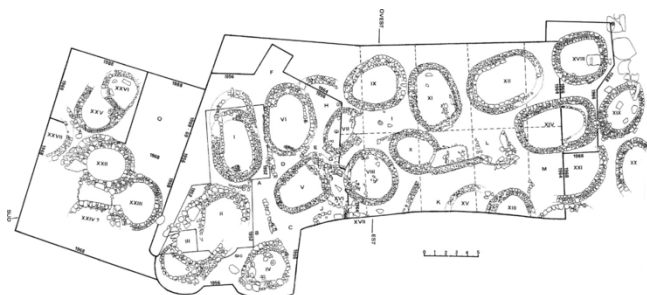


Figure 5.6. Plan of the EBA village of Capo Graziano on the island of Filicudi, Aeolian islands.

Sicily: General Geographic and Environmental Data and Archaeological Sequences

The status of Sicily in the context of the Mediterranean and European Bronze Age is somewhat controversial, as it qualifies as the largest Mediterranean island in strictly geographical terms. Because of its close proximity to the Italian peninsula, separated by just 3 km of the Strait of Messina, it has often been seen as closely connected to the mainland (e.g. Chapman 1990; Patton 1996). This assumption depends on a limited knowledge of the island's archaeological record and associated historical processes. It is nevertheless clear that proximity to Italy was an essential factor of the fragile nature of Sicily's insularity, which at different times was at least partially superseded by the intensification of contacts with the peninsula.

Sicily is characterized by the Peloritani, Nebrodi and Madonie mountain ranges running along the northern coast, and by some relatively high mountains in the west-central zone. Its highest elevation (3323 m) is the volcanic peak of Mount Etna, in the island's northeastern zone. The most important plains are in the southeastern corner, around the Monti Iblei near Catania, in the southwest around Gela, and in the west, between Trapani on the northwest coast and Sciacca on the southern coast. The rest of the region is made up of hills and small plains. Erosion and karst formations are specific to the south-central section. The main rivers, from

west to east, are the Belice, Platani and Salso that run towards the south coast, the Tellaro, Anapo and Simeto on the east coast, and several smaller ones in the north. Marshes and lagoons were frequent along the coasts (Figures 5.1 and 5.2).

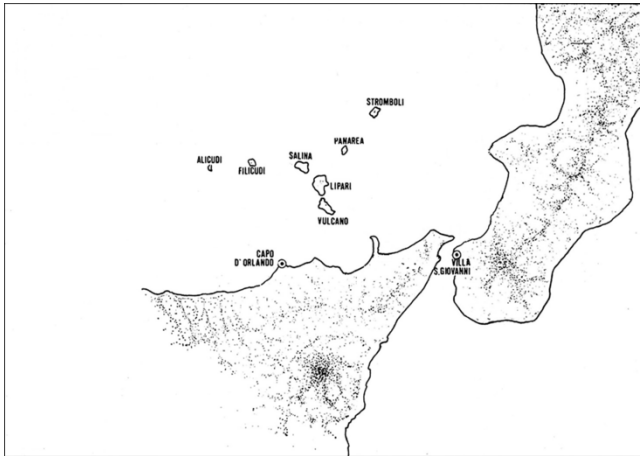


Figure 5.1. Map of the southern Tyrrhenian area: northeastern Sicily, the southern coast of Calabria and the Aeolian archipelago.



Figure 5.2. (a) Map showing the distribution of EBA sites in Sicily and Aeolian islands (after Tusa 1999). Sites quoted in the text are: *Castelluccio culture* (triangles): 21. Thapsos; 23. Castelluccio; 28. Ognina; 37. Monte Sallia, Tabuto, Raci and Racello; 56. Manfria; 65. Muculufa; 66. Naro; 68. Partanna. *Rodi-Tindari-Vallelunga culture* (open dots): 1. Vallelunga; 4. Boccadifalco; 5. Tindari; 6. Rodi; 15. Valsavoia; 100. Ciavolaro; 102. Messina-Bocchetta. *Capo Graziano culture* (dots): 5. Tindari; 8. Filicudi Capo Graziano; 10. Salina Serro dei Cianfi; 11. Lipari Acropoli, Pignataro di Fuori, contrada Diana; 12. Panarea Punta Peppa Maria, La Calcara, Milazzese; 21. Milazzo. *Moarda-bell beaker culture* (squares):

17. Moarda. Map of Sicily and the Aeolian islands showing the distribution of MBA sites (after Tusa 1999). Sites quoted in the text are: *Thapsos culture* (triangles): 1. Thapsos; 2. Naxos; 3. Paternò; 4. Caltagirone; 5. Colle San Mauro; 6. Molinello di Augusta; 7. Buscemi; 8. Floridia; 9. Grotta Chiusazza; 10. Ognina; 11. Cozzo del Pantano; 12. Matrensa; 13. Plemmirio; 14. Grotta Calafarina; 15. Santa Croce Camarina; 20. Grotta Ticchiara; 20A. Cannatello; 21. Milena; 22. Caldare; 23. Sopracanale; 23A. Capreria; 24. Ulina; 30. Marcita; 31. Erbe Bianche; 32. Case Pietra; 33. Scirinda; 34. Madre Chiesa; 35. Siracusa Ortigia. *Milazzese culture* (dots): 1. Panarea Milazzese; 2. Lipari Acropoli; 4. Salina Portella; 5. Filicudi Capo Graziano (Montagnola); 6. Milazzo; 10. Ustica Faraglioni.

The main natural resources are sulphur, salt and alum in the south-central section, metals, including copper, in the Peloritani mountains, and some amber (simetite) from the east-central area. Lipari obsidian was among the most important materials circulating in the central Mediterranean throughout the Neolithic, up until the Early Bronze Age; obsidian from Pantelleria, both less abundant and of inferior quality, had a limited circulation.

Two small island groups lie within a short distance from Sicily. The Aeolian islands (including Lipari: [Figure 5.1](#)) are made up of seven small volcanic islands close to one another in the southeastern end of the Tyrrhenian sea – not far from either the west coast of Calabria and the northeastern tip of Sicily. This group might also include Ustica, which is a small, isolated volcanic island at ca. 50 km north of Palermo. Only very few traces of Bronze Age occupation are reported from the Egadi islands off the Sicilian west coast (Tusa 1999: 419). At considerable distance from the south coast lies Pantelleria that was loosely connected to Sicily during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages (Marazzi and Tusa 2005). The islands of Malta and Gozo were by contrast culturally autonomous, even if contact and trade with Sicily was frequent during the Bronze and Iron Ages.

The Sicilian and Aeolian archaeological Bronze Age

sequence is markedly different from the Italian one with regard to both formal features and chronology. Since the archaeological sequence in this area matches closely onto the historical processes in the period under consideration, I follow the established local convention. The overall chronology is based on a limited number of calibrated ^{14}C dates, stratigraphic evidence from Lipari and a few key sequences in Sicily, and on the accepted chronology of Mycenaean Late Helladic pottery (ca. 1650–1050 BC). Two recent syntheses of pre- and protohistoric Sicily have been published by Leighton (1999) and Tusa (1999).

The Sicilian Early Bronze Age (Figure 5.2a) is represented by the Naro-Partanna/Castelluccio, Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga and Moarda *facies*, with absolute dates ranging from ca. 2200 to 1500 BC. In the Aeolian islands, the Early Bronze Age Capo Graziano culture is divided in two phases: ca. 2200–1800 and ca. 1800–1450 BC, with the earliest Aegean imports between late MH and LH IIIA1 concentrated in the second phase. The Middle Bronze Age, with the relatively homogeneous Thapsos–Milazzese *facies*, is dated between ca. 1500/1450 and ca. 1250 BC, and associated with LH IIIA and IIIB imports (Figure 5.2b). The Late Bronze Age that runs into the early Iron Age without interruption is again divided between the Sicilian Pantalica culture, probably beginning in the thirteenth century BC, and the roughly contemporary Ausonian I, characterized by an archaeological *facies* of Subapennine mainland type at Lipari and in northeast Sicily. From the eleventh century BC until the Iron Age, the Sicilian archaeological record breaks into an intricate pattern of many distinct *facies* which may be formally related either to the Ausonian or the local Bronze Age tradition, or to both.

With the notable exception of the Aeolian archipelago that was systematically explored by Luigi Bernabò Brea and Madeleine Cavalier from the 1950s onwards, and of a few more or less recent excavations, the pre- and protohistoric record from Sicily suffers from an almost complete lack of systematic publications. In the east, the most important and best-known sites were excavated and readily published by

Paolo Orsi more than a century ago. Large areas of the island, especially in the north, also remain virtually unexplored, although southern and western areas of Sicily have experienced a recent intensification of fieldwork, the results of which, however, have yet to be published. Past excavations of important sites like the Middle Bronze Age Thapsos–Milazzese settlements and tombs (Alberti 2004; 2006), the Late Bronze Age cemeteries of Caltagirone (Tanasi 2008b) and the Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age cemetery of Cassibile (Turco 2000) have been re-examined in recent studies. Significant effort has gone into the construction of comprehensive typo-chronological frameworks of mobile artefacts and settlement and funerary structures. Major problems remain, however, as only very few burials have been found intact, collective burials were a widespread practice and skeletal remains have rarely been analysed. It does not help that the key site of Thapsos is only known from preliminary reports.

In what follows, I will examine the archaeological sequences in Sicily and the Aeolian islands diachronically in relation to different features, specific combinations and relative incidence of the main components highlighted in the introduction, namely the more or less marked autonomy of Sicilian cultures from the Italian mainland; Sicily's role relative to the indigenous coastal trade system, as exemplified by its relationships with the Aeolian islands and with the Calabria coast; the systematic connections with the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean, especially Cyprus; and the evidence of a steady trend of integration or, perhaps more precisely, hybridization of structural and organizational features as a result of these encounters (Knapp 2008: 57–61).

The Early Bronze Age (ca. 2200–1500/1450 BC)

Throughout this period, the cultural differences between the main island of Sicily and the minor islands of the Aeolian group and Ustica are such that they warrant separate

discussion.

Sicily

In the last few decades, a pivotal assumption relating to the functioning of the Sicilian Early Bronze Age ([Figure 5.2a](#)) has been the identification of two main archaeological cultures – Castelluccio and Rodi-Tindari-Vallelunga – implicitly considered as the material correlates of distinct cultural entities. However, in contrast to some hundreds of Castelluccio sites, very few complexes can be exclusively attributed to Rodi-Tindari-Vallelunga. These are all located along the northern coast, and comprise the settlements of Boccadifalco, Tindari and Messina, and three burials in artificial caves (*grotticelle*) from Rodi. At some other sites, e.g. Serra del Palco, Ciavolaro di Ribera (Agrigento) and Vallelunga (Caltanissetta), there is instead a combination of Castelluccio and Rodi-Tindari-Vallelunga pottery.

A third component, the Moarda *facies*, is only known from a few contexts in a limited part of western Sicily. It is usually seen as a pottery style dependent on the presence of a small Bell Beaker group during the late Copper Age. Worth mentioning are finally the systematic occurrence of Aeolian Capo Graziano pottery, especially in the northeast, and Tarxien Cemetery pottery. The latter is assumed to come from Malta, but it has recently been argued to a local production ([Procelli 2004](#)).

Castelluccio sites are distributed over the whole of Sicily, but they do not occur on the minor islands. The main concentrations are in eastern Sicily, south of Messina (around Catania, Siracusa and Ragusa), and in the south, with large groups around Gela, Licata, Caltanissetta and Enna. The archaeological *facies* is characterized by handmade pottery with matt-painted decoration in geometric patterns, usually black-on-red. Specific vessel types include jars with two vertical handles (*anforette*), biconical and ovoid jars, cups with high handles and conical cups on high stands. This pottery style is related to the local Copper Age S. Ippolito and Serrafferlicchio cultures, and also

bears some significant resemblance to the Middle Helladic matt-painted pottery. An early Castelluccio site, with calibrated ^{14}C dates between 2300 and 1959 BC, is the La Muculufa complex, consisting of a village and a cult place (Holloway *et al.* 1990). The pottery from this site has an impressive array of geometric matt-painted decorations (Figure 5.3). The Naro-Partanna group, located in the southwestern interior and coastal areas of Sicily, is considered to be an early manifestation of the Castelluccio *facies*. A four-phase typo-chronological sequence of Castelluccio pottery has been proposed by Cultraro (2001).

In striking contrast to the Castelluccio *facies*, Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga pottery is defined by the complete absence of painted decoration and the generally grey colour and lustrous surface (Figure 5.4). Vessel shapes and functional features share some elements in common with Castelluccio ware (deep carinated cups, cylindrical cups with high handles and flaring lips), and with the Palma Campania and Protoapennine pottery of the peninsula (e.g. conical stands, shallow high-handled cups and large carinated bowls).

Contexts characterized by Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga pottery have been identified on the Tropea promontory that juts into Tyrrhenian sea off Calabria, facing northeastern Sicily and the Aeolian islands (Pacciarelli and Varricchio 2004) (Figure 5.4b). Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga features and pottery are also known on the Ionian coast of Calabria (Capo Piccolo) and on the Adriatic side of southern Apulia at Cavallino (Lecce: Pancrazzi 1979). In a recent study of the Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga *facies* and its distribution across the Strait of Messina, Procelli (2004) has proposed seeing it as a localized, unpainted specification of Castelluccio pottery (*facies dello stretto*). As a further elaboration of this hypothesis, I would suggest that Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga is the material marker of Sicily's participation in the indigenous coastal trade system that was mainly based on the north coast.

The Castelluccio settlement system was organized by clusters of small villages: the nine huts at Manfria (Gela) represent the only village that has been fully excavated

(Orlandini 1962). The sites are mainly situated in the interior, often on small hills and plateaus, as at Valsavoia on the southern Catania plain, although several are located directly on or near the coast. In the southeast, settlements made use of caves in the flanks of the steep and narrow river valleys coming down from the Hyblean mountains. On the lower slopes of the Etna and in the plain below, caves in old lava flows were heavily used for both settlement and burial (Tusa 1999: 355–56). Settlements consisted of small huts of circular or irregular plan, probably with conical roofs and supported by wooden poles; the lower part of the circular wall was built of stones. A single larger hut of oval or rectangular plan has been recorded on some sites, including Manfria. Two types of fortifications are associated with some villages. A stone wall with semi-circular towers on the outside existed at Thapsos and Timpa Dieri (Siracusa). At Monte Grande (Agrigento), not far from the southern coast, a settlement protected by circular stone enclosures was probably involved in the extraction and trade of local sulphur (Castellana 1990; 1998).

Special functions have also been identified. At the eponymous site of Castelluccio (Siracusa), on a wide plateau above the Tellaro valley, an exceptionally large oval hut, more than 20 m long, occupied the settlement's upper terrace. The floor and the lower section of the wall were cut into the bedrock. Notable concentrations of pottery were found in two large rectangular holes dug into the floor, associated with the repeated use of fire. These have been interpreted as ritual offerings, which the excavator has suggested denote a religious function for this building (Voza 1999: 17–23, figs 13 and 14). Flint mining was carried out in the middle Ippari valley (Ragusa) by the inhabitants of sites on the surrounding hills (Sallia, Raci, Tabuto and Racello). Tunnels, initially dug into the calcareous rock to reach the rich flint deposits, were subsequently used for burial.

A votive deposit, if not a dump, has been found in the village of Ciavolaro di Ribera, Agrigento (Castellana 1990). An interesting site that has yielded most evidence for

connections between Malta and Sicily in this period lies on the small headland and island of Ognina (Siracusa), where the isthmus provided a protected landing place. The key role of this site in the Early Bronze Age coastal trading system is indicated by the association of a high percentage of Tarxien Cemetery with Castelluccio, grey unpainted and Aeolian Capo Graziano pottery (see Tanasi and Vella, this volume).

The dominant funerary practice is inhumation, sometimes as single burial or more often as multiple or collective depositions of 15 to 50 individuals in natural and artificial caves (*grotticelle*) in exposed rock faces. Megalithic funerary structures are rare and usually associated with *grotticelle*. In the cemeteries of the Tellaro valley, in Sicily's southeast corner, simple *grotticelle* of one or two small circular rooms alternated with a small number of spectacularly elaborated tombs. In some cases, stone slabs used to close off funeral chambers were sculpted, probably figuratively, and others were entered through a portico with columns carved from the rock.

Grave goods invariably consist of large quantities of pottery, flint blades, stone ornaments, a few beads of local amber, bone artefacts, including bossed bone plaques as known from Troy, Lerna, Apulia and Malta, and a few exotic bronzes such as scale balances, tweezers and a flat spearhead, which also find parallels in the Aegean and Anatolian world (Leighton 1999: 141–45, figs 70 and 71; Cultraro 2001). The most notable exception to the practice of collective burial is a small cemetery of Rodi- Tindari-Vallelunga *facies* at Messina-Torrente Bocchetta, where individual inhumations had been deposited in large ceramic containers (Tusa 1999: 457).

As regards subsistence, the record from Manfria includes cereals and a high percentage of cattle (50%), along with sheep/goats, swine and horse and dog in small proportions. Local craftsmen produced a wide variety of stone artefacts from chipped flint and polished stone. Bronze artefacts, mainly flat axes and daggers, are rare.

The specific and relatively homogeneous *facies* which

characterized Sicily throughout the Early Bronze Age marks a sharp difference from the Italian mainland, where there are no parallels for matt-painted decoration or the specific range of forms and functions of pottery. Other specifically local features include the circular huts with stone bases and the small *grotticella* tombs with multiple inhumations. These are clear indications that, in this period, Sicily's insularity was not significantly biased by its proximity to mainland Italy. The clusters of small villages probably reflect the main units of social and settlement organization, and show no evidence of a hierarchical territorial system. A trend towards the emergence of more complex and centralized forms of political organization in the southeastern part of the island might be inferred from Castelluccio's dominant position and its large cult building. The architectural and figurative features, as well as the exotic funerary goods that are exclusive to some *grotticella* tombs in this area, may indicate that competition among kinship groups was the social mechanism operating in this context. A key component of the overall picture of Early Bronze Age Sicily is the exchange system, which apparently functioned on two different levels: local products, such as flint, stone ornaments and simetite (local amber) circulated within the island, even if some Sicilian amber may have reached the mainland, while exotic goods, some of Aegean origin, and possibly metal, reached Sicily through its participation in the coastal trading system.

The Aeolian Islands

On Ustica, which I consider part of the Aeolian islands for present purposes, there is a small group of *grotticella* graves with Early Bronze Age Capo Graziano pottery, but this island was too westerly and isolated to play a significant role in the processes that unfolded in the southern Tyrrhenian during the Bronze Age. Alicudi, the smallest of the Aeolian islands, and Vulcano may also not have been involved in the local exchange system. The remaining Aeolian islands ([Figure 5.1](#)) behaved as an integrated unit throughout the Bronze Age.

The local Early Bronze Age *facies* is Capo Graziano, named for the most important site at Filicudi. It is divided into two

phases of ca. 2200–1800 and 1800–1450 BC, and its most distinctive feature is handmade *impasto* pottery with a greyish-black lustrous surface. The main shapes include large containers (*dolia*), ovoid and biconical jars, deep biconical or rounded cups and jugs with high handles, and large carinated or conical truncated bowls. The incised decoration of zigzag and parallel lines, concentric circles or rows of dots (Figure 5.5) is barely present during phase I but becomes frequent in phase II, often covering the vessels' whole surface. According to the reconstruction proposed by Bernabò Brea, throughout phase I, the most important Capo Graziano settlements were situated in the open plains of Piano del Porto at Filicudi and Contrada Diana at Lipari, whereas at some point in phase II the main settlements shifted to naturally defended positions such as Lipari-Acropolis and Filicudi-Capo Graziano (Figure 5.6). This was in response to a situation of growing insecurity around the mid-second millennium BC. As we shall see, these developments fit well into the overall archaeological evidence for this period.

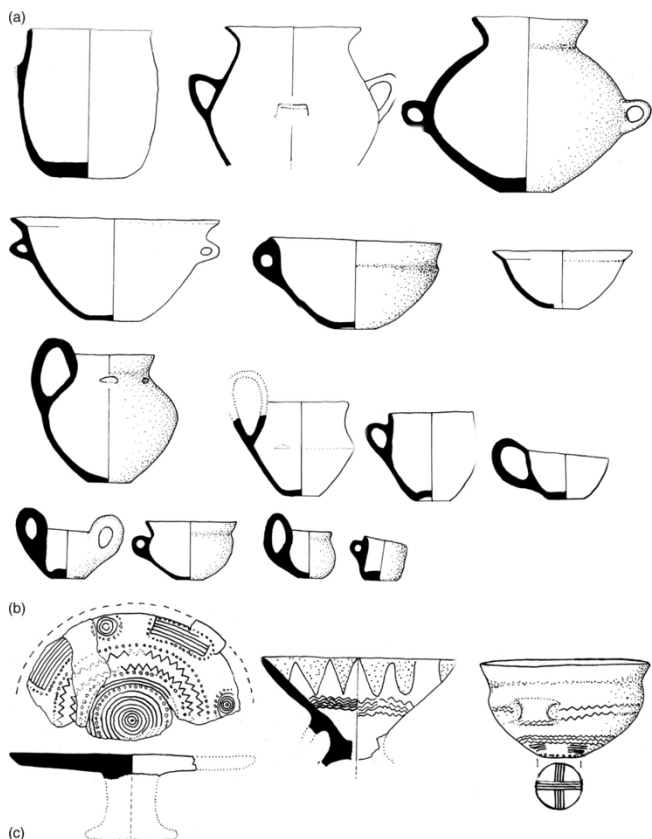


Figure 5.5. Early Bronze Age Capo Graziano pottery: a. jugs; b. cups; c. bowls with engraved decoration (after Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1980: pl. 118.2, 7, 8; pl. 124.3, 4) (not to scale).

Traces of Capo Graziano settlements are also known at Panarea, Punta Peppa Maria, Piano Quartara and La Calcara. Another important find in Lipari's harbour near Pignataro di Fuori is the possible cargo of a boat carrying pottery from Lipari to the other islands. The Capo Graziano pottery from this site was made from Sicilian clay with local temper (Tusa 1999: 427). Other evidence comes from Salina (Serro dei Cianfi) and Stromboli. A few, probably related, elements that emerge during phase II include early Mycenaean pottery (LH I, II and IIIA), now known in considerable quantities at Lipari-Acropolis, Capo Graziano and Salina Serro dei Cianfi,

the use of pottery tokens, which have been interpreted as a possible calculation device, and potters' marks engraved on local vessels (Marazzi 1997). The villages comprise various dozen tightly packed circular or oval huts, built on a stone base (Figure 5.6). In the village of Lipari-Acropolis, a large oval hut with miniature vessels may have been used for religious functions. The only funerary evidence is a group of about 30 cremation burials on Lipari at Contrada Diana. Agriculture, sheep/goat, cattle, swine, fish and molluscs were the main subsistence resources.

The islands' interdependence is not only shown by their shared archaeological *facies* but is also evident from the widespread use of Lipari obsidian. From the end of the third to the first half of the second millennium BC, the key role of the Aeolian islands in the central Mediterranean coastal trading system is indicated by two elements: their cultural autonomy from Sicily, and the wide distribution of Capo Graziano pottery, which includes the northern and eastern coasts of Sicily and the Tyrrhenian coast of mainland Italy. The local production of Capo Graziano pottery has been identified at Milazzo, whereas imported pieces come from Taureana (Calabria) and Vivara-Punta Mezzogiorno (Campania), in association with LH I-II pottery (Tusa 1999: 447), as well as Luni sul Mignone in central Italy (modern Lazio: Levi *et al.* 2006: 1104 and fig. 3). Lipari obsidian continued to appear in Italian contexts throughout this period. At least in the Tyrrhenian Sea, the Aeolian islands are therefore likely to have played a central role in coastal trade, which may well have extended farther south and east towards Malta, Pantelleria and the Ionian and Adriatic regions of southern Italy. The general similarities in material culture throughout this area probably point to intensive communication through this local trade system for the circulation of basic raw materials and possibly artefacts. In the advanced phase of Capo Graziano, the shift of the main settlements to naturally defended positions and the evidence of a substantial presence of Aegean groups among the local communities of Lipari and Filicudi mark the beginning of a radical transformation of communication and trade in this area, as became clear in the subsequent period.

The Middle Bronze Age and Thapsos–Milazzese Culture (ca. 1500/1450–1250 BC)

In striking contrast to the Early Bronze Age situation, the Sicilian Middle Bronze Age is characterized by a formally homogeneous archaeological culture, the so-called Thapsos–Milazzese *facies* that was shared by Sicily and the Aeolian islands and that is also documented at Ustica (I Faraglioni: Holloway and Lukesh 1995; 2001), Pantelleria and on the Poro promontory of the Calabria coast. The development of this *facies* marks the maximum intensity of Aegean presence, consistently including an eastern Mediterranean component. This is also the period in which Sicily's connectivity (Knapp 2008: 22–24), i.e. its potential for the integration of foreign features and groups, was fully effective. The resulting process of cultural hybridization (Knapp 2008: 57–61) is specific to the Thapsos–Milazzese groups and differs radically from the contemporary evidence of Aegean contact in southern Italy. The range of recent calibrated ¹⁴C dates from the Milazzese village at Portella di Salina is 1525–1320 BC (1σ), and 1605–1260 (2σ: Martinelli 2005: 289–97).

Thapsos–Milazzese pottery is a handmade *impasto* with some local differences between eastern Sicily and the Aeolian islands. The Thapsos repertoire (Figure 5.7) includes large containers (*dolia*), carinated bowls/jars on a high flaring stand and with a horned plate on one side (apparently ceremonial vessels), two-handled jars, narrow-necked jugs, bowls both plain and on a high stand, and deep cups with a high handle. Engraved decorations are frequent, as are schematic plastic cordons. A specific feature of the Sicilian east coast is the imitation of Aegean and Cypriot shapes, such as two-handled bowls, jars and beaked jugs, and the rendition of 'pictorial' Mycenaean decorations in local *impasto* (D'Agata 2000) (Figure 5.8). Maltese Borġ in-Nadur pottery also turns up frequently in early Thapsos contexts, in both burials and the settlement (Tanasi 2008a; Tanasi and Vella, this volume). The Milazzese repertoire of the Aeolian islands and northeastern Sicily is less

sophisticated, without ceremonial shapes and Mycenaean/Cypriot imitations, and usually with plain decorations of plastic cordons. General similarities in shape and the absence of painting seem to indicate that the Thapsos-Milazzese was an elaboration of the older Rodì-Tindari-Vallelunga pottery.

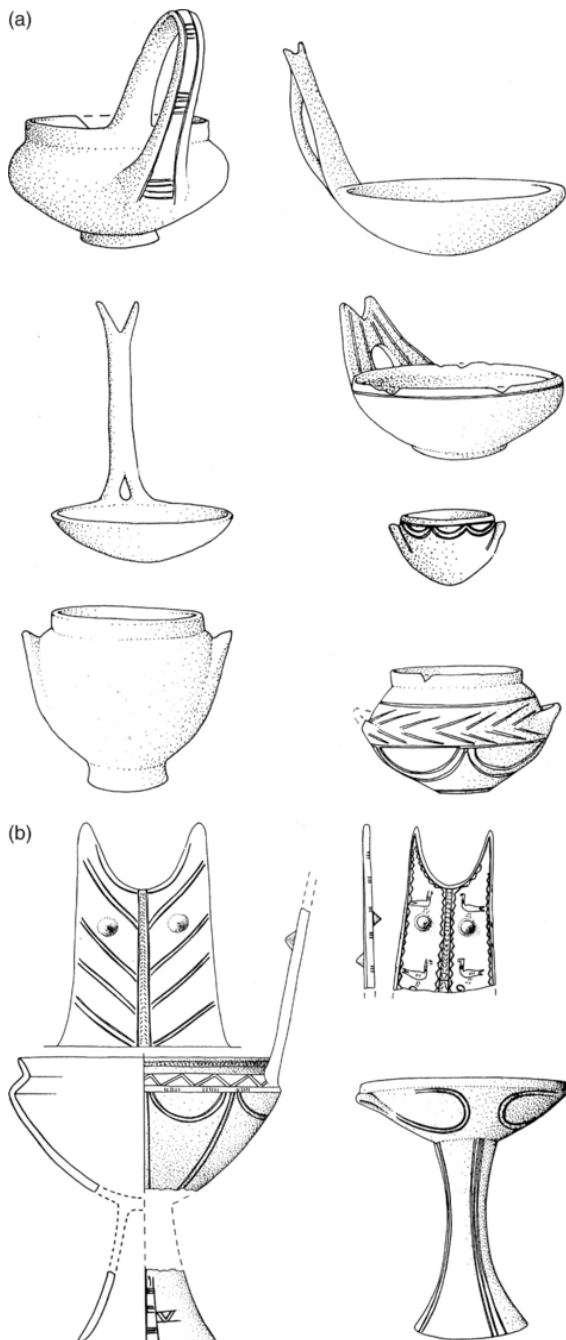


Figure 5.7. Middle Bronze Age Thapsos pottery: a. cups and bowls; b. basins on a high stand with decorated vertical

plates (after D'Agata 2000: figs 2 and 3) (not to scale).

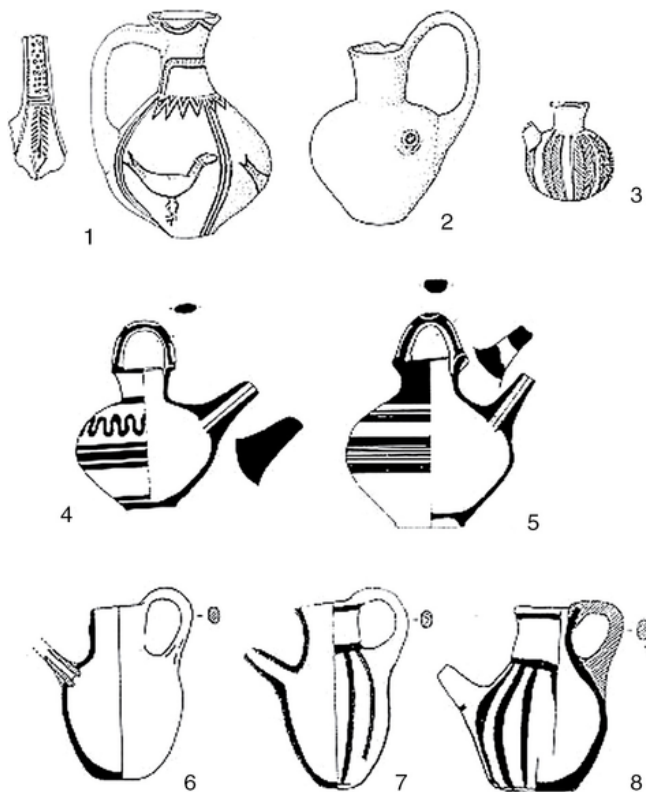


Figure 5.8. Middle Bronze Age handmade Thapsos pottery based on Mycenaean and Cypriot examples. The engraved decoration of the jug n. 1 is a reproduction of Mycenaean pictorial patterns. 1–3: from Thapsos; 4 and 5: Mycenaean feeding bottles from Mycenae, LH IIIA2 and Zygouries; 6–8: Cypriot White Painted Ware feeding bottles (after D'Agata 2000: fig. 4) (not to scale).

The main direct evidence of the Aegean–eastern Mediterranean connection with east Sicilian sites consists of imported Mycenaean (LH IIIA–B) pottery, Cypriot pottery, amber and faience beads, possibly of eastern origin, a fragment of an oxhide ingot from Thapsos and a cylinder seal from Siracusa (see below). Although the general distribution of Middle Bronze Age settlements in Sicily did

not change significantly from the Early Bronze Age, their number was notably lower (Figure 5.2b). This is usually interpreted as a development towards a more centralized political and territorial organization. Two core areas can be identified that stand out because they combine a concentration of indigenous settlement with intensive Aegean and eastern Mediterranean contacts. They are situated on the east and south coasts at or near the modern cities of Siracusa and Agrigento.

In general, settlements are located directly on the coast, either in the plain or on small promontories, or in the interior. Along with small concentrations of settlement material, the main evidence consists of single burials and cemeteries. Huts are circular or, less frequently, rectangular, with walls built on the usual stone basis. Burials took place in simple *grotticelle* that are of the type already seen in the Early Bronze Age, or in more complex rock-cut structures with an antechamber and lateral niches. A new structural feature of this period is the ogival (pointed) profile of the tomb's vault, often ending in a small circular cavity. These elements probably reproduce the specific shape of Mycenaean-Minoan tholos-type tombs (Tomasello 1995–96, 2004) (Figure 5.13). Another but rather rare funerary ritual that entailed the deposition of individual inhumations in large *dolia* is mostly found in a small cemetery near Thapsos on the small Magnisi peninsula ca. 10 km north of Siracusa. Other sites in east Sicily include Ognina, Cozzo Pantano, Siracusa Ortigia, Plemmirio, Matrensa (Siracusa) and Molinello di Augusta. Relevant inland sites are Grotta Chiusazza, Floridaia, Buscemi, Caltagirone, Colle S.Mauro and Paternò, and in the Ippari and Dirillo valleys. Coastal sites in Sicily's southeastern corner include Grotta Calafarina (near Cape Passero) and Santa Croce Camarina in the Gulf of Gela.

Although the final publication is still pending, the site of Thapsos is documented by a substantial body of preliminary data and recent analyses, elaborations and discussions. To sum up, in the general but not uncontested opinion, this site was an *emporion* or trading centre that was intensively frequented by Aegean and Cypriot/eastern Mediterranean

traders (e.g. van Wijngaarden 2002: 229–36). An alternative interpretation has been proposed by D’Agata (2000), who would rather see it as the logistical centre of a territorial system based on Aegean models. In this perspective, Thapsos would be the only site where Aegean immigrants actually resided in some numbers. The main archaeological evidence for this interpretation is the large storage vessels at the site and the local production of both specific weapons, in particular the so-called Thapsos-type swords, and pottery that was handmade but with Mycenaean pottery shapes. Some vessels were decorated by engraving figurative scenes that were painted on Mycenaean pottery, which has been argued to imply the adoption of Aegean habits and functions (D’Agata 2001) (Figure 5.8: 1). The archaeological homogeneity of the Thapsos–Milazzese phase in Sicily and the Aeolian islands might moreover point to political implications, but the existing archaeological record does not allow us to explore this hypothesis any further. The overall archaeological evidence at Thapsos strongly supports the view that this site was essentially an emporion or trading centre.

The settlement of Thapsos occupied an area of 1000×300 m next to the isthmus that connects the peninsula to the Sicilian coast and between two small harbours. It may have been protected by a wall, which was recorded in the southeast of the area (Figure 5.9). Cemeteries excavated by Orsi are situated north and south of the settlement, while Voza worked in one to the south of the peninsula. The reconstruction proposed here follows the reports of the latter excavator, who proposed three main phases (Voza 1973; 1999: 23–31).

- Phase 1 (fifteenth–fourteenth centuries BC): northern settlement area, area A or 1 (Figure 5.9a). Seven circular huts with stone bases are associated with smaller rectangular structures and connected by narrow pathways. The finds from the settlement include ceremonial vessels such as jars on high stands. The funerary evidence for this phase includes the earliest *grotticella* burials imitating a tholos; alongside

local *impasto* pottery, the grave goods included imported Mycenaean (LH IIIA1–2) and Cypriot (White Shaved and Base Ring II) pottery (which was probably locally made according to Karageorghis 1998), glass, faience and amber ornaments, probably also from the Aegean, and a considerable quantity of Maltese Borġ in-Nadur vessels; the latter also occurred in the settlement.

- Phase 2 (thirteenth–twelfth centuries BC, roughly corresponding to Mycenaean/LH IIIB–C): main settlement core, area B or 2 (Figure 5.9b). The settlement is organized by modules of rectangular rooms joined at right angles, with a central open space or courtyard. A few circular huts are incorporated into the rectilinear structures. This plan and spatial organization are unparalleled in Sicily and the central Mediterranean in this period, and have thus often been associated with organizational features of the Mycenaean palaces. The currently prevailing opinion is that the settlement may best be compared to rectangular rooms around a central court as seen in Late Cypriot cities such as Enkomi (Holloway 1991: 34–35; Karageorghis 1998; Knapp 2008: 216–21, figs 43b and 44).
- Phase 3 (eleventh–ninth centuries BC). The evidence for this phase does not seem to be related to the previous settlement organization. Identifiable features include Maltese pottery (late Borġ in-Nadur and Bahrija) and local bronzes of late ‘Ausonian’ and Cassibile type.

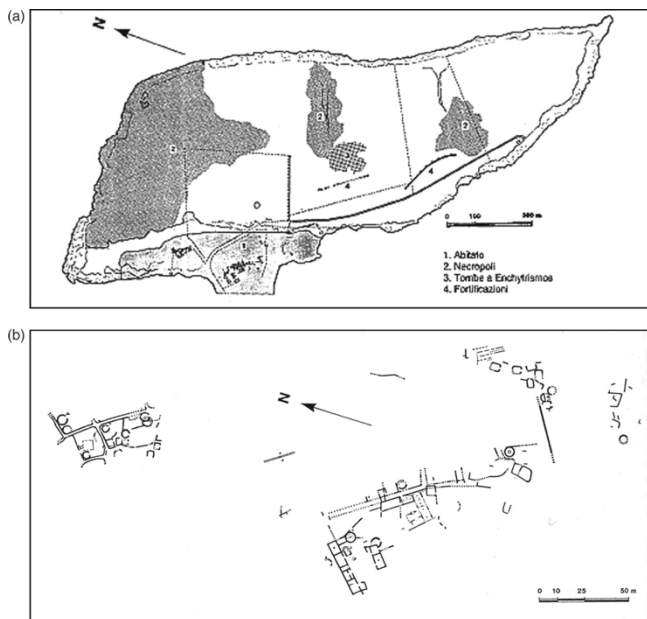


Figure 5.9. Overview map and settlement plan of the Middle Bronze Age site of Thapsos on the Magnisi peninsula of east Sicily (phase 2, after Voza 1999: figs 19 and 20).

In a recent study, Alberti (2006) produced a diachronic contextual analysis of the grave goods and funerary structures in the Thapsos cemeteries, exploring relationships between combinations of local and imported grave goods and funerary structures. He noted a marked trend of social differentiation during phase 2, when the distribution of locally produced imitations of Aegean and east Mediterranean pottery correlated well with the size and degree of elaboration of tombs. Other significant features include the display of exotica, and the occurrence of weapons and tools. Since this phase is also characterized by the ‘proto-urban’ reorganization of the settlement, Alberti (2006) has interpreted the Thapsos community of phase 2 in terms of an initial type of chiefdom.

Other east-coast sites involved in trade, even if probably on a lesser scale, are Ognina, Plemmirio, Naxos and Siracusa, where an important piece of evidence is a tomb

with Thapsos, Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery and an eastern Mediterranean cylinder seal (Leighton 1999: 178)

Around Agrigento, on and just behind the coast, Thapsos settlements have been documented at Milena-Serra del Palco, Madre Chiesa, Scirinda di Ribera, Sopracanale (Sant'Angelo Muxaro) and in the Ticchiara cave. Small numbers of Aegean sherds (LH IIB–IIIA) at Monte Grande and other sites around Agrigento (Madre Chiesa and Milena) may indicate the direct involvement of southern Sicily in the earliest systematic sailings from the Aegean (Castellana 1998). For a later phase, probably from the thirteenth century BC onwards, the sites around Agrigento have repeatedly yielded bronze weapons and vessels, and perhaps pottery, with Cypriot parallels. A key site with Mediterranean trading connections in this area is Cannatello, which is a small coastal settlement that was established in an advanced phase of the Middle Bronze Age and that remained occupied into the Late Bronze Age. It consisted of circular and rectangular huts within a circular stone enclosure. Finds include Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery and a fragment of an oxhide ingot (De Miro 1999). Funerary complexes along the Platani valley include two tholos-type tombs at Milena-Monte Campanella (La Rosa 1982), which have yielded Thapsos and LH IIIB or C pottery, two swords and a dagger (tomb A). A tholos or *grotticella* tomb is known at Caldare-Monte S. Vincenzo, where two bronze bowls of possible Cypriot provenance and two swords were found. Similar finds plus pottery of Late Bronze Age Pantalica North type and possibly a Cypriot cup come from a cave burial at Capreria (Sant'Angelo Muxaro: Castellana 2000: 212–37). Other bronze work comes from a hoard at Valledolmo (Palermo), while Cypriot parallels for Sicilian bronzes have been noted by Lo Schiavo *et al.* (1985; cf. Vagnetti 1986; Graziadio 1997). In western Sicily, the main Thapsos sites are Case Pietra, Erbe Bianche, Marcita and Ulina-Monte Castellazzo, where just a few Mycenaean sherds are associated with local pottery (D'Agata 2001: 453).

The Milazzese *facies* is best known from the systematic excavations of several important settlements in the Aeolian

islands. These are the villages of the Acropolis (Lipari), Punta Milazzese (Panarea), Portella and Serro dei Cianfi (Salina) and Montagnola di Capo Graziano (Filicudi) that continued to be inhabited from the previous phase. At San Calogero (Lipari), an ashlar building was found that is a proper tholos in architectural terms and that was connected to a thermal well and associated with Milazzese pottery (Bernabò Brea *et al.* 1990). An important complex, but only loosely connected with the Aeolian islands, is the Faraglioni village at Ustica (Holloway *et al.* 1990). The main Milazzese complex in northeast Sicily is the cemetery of Milazzo, with ca. 50 inhumations in large *dolia* (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1959).

Although they were fully involved in the Mycenaean connection, none of the Milazzese settlements became a real trading settlement with long-distance connections at a scale comparable to the main Sicilian sites. They are relatively small villages of 100–200 inhabitants that are mostly situated on naturally defended positions and made up of oval and rectangular huts, not unlike the earlier Bronze Age ones (Figure 5.6). In almost all aspects, they appear to be direct continuations of the advanced Capo Graziano phase within the overall process of change in the southern Tyrrhenian area. There are indications of a more effective integration among the islands, as the village of Portella di Salina, located on a steep crest on the island's northern coast, was probably a specialized site to collect rainwater for a number of communities (Martinelli 2005: 308–10) (Figure 5.10). Another shared activity followed from the lack of good-quality potting clays on the islands and the need to import clay from Sicily (Levi *et al.* 2006: 1100–101). Both the supply of clay and the manufacturing and distribution of finished vessels may have become centrally organized. As regards the Aegean connection, in addition to the imported LH–Mycenaean pottery, there are some ornaments from Salina that may be Aegean imports. A final feature of the Milazzese groups worth noting are the identification marks engraved on local vessels, similar to those noted in the late Capo Graziano phase (Marazzi 1997; Martinelli 2005: 206–29). Although these marks are unsystematically associated

with different types of vessels, there can be no doubt that they were meant to convey some kind of information in a conventional symbolic form, and they may therefore be considered a form of writing.

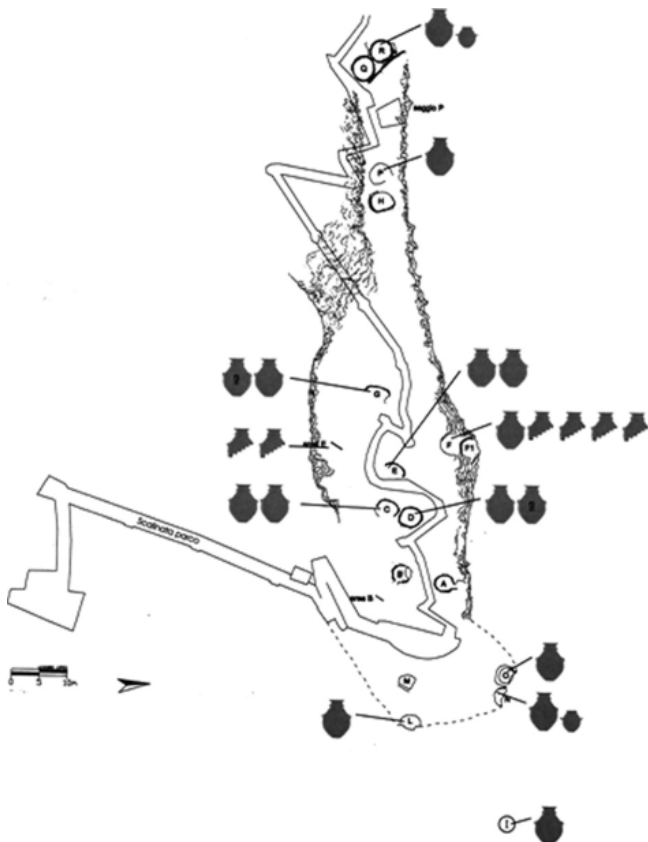


Figure 5.10. Plan of the Middle Bronze Age village of Portella on the Aeolian island of Salina. The large *dolia* associated with the circular huts and the location of the village on a steep crest suggest that collecting rainwater was a specialized function of this site (after Martinelli 2005: pl. xvi).

The roles of Sicily and the Aeolian archipelago changed radically in this period. In the Early Bronze Age, the Aegean approach had initially been to participate in the local coastal trading system from the main bases in the Flaegean and Aeolian islands and on the east and south coasts of Sicily.

The gradually increasing Aegean presence probably marked a structural change in the nature and organization of the exchange system, as the Aeolian islands lost their central role in the maritime network that connected indigenous communities across the central Mediterranean and became a northward extension of Sicily. The visible effects of this new situation are the shift of settlements to naturally defended positions on the Aeolian islands, the decrease of Apennine settlement and the establishment of Milazzese groups on the Poro promontory. The occurrence of Apennine pottery in the Aeolian Milazzese contexts (Martinelli 2005: 179–84, 202–205) may also be the result of raids from the islands on the Italian coast. The overall change of the situation in this area was, on the one hand, the monopolization of trade by and its reorientation towards Sicily and the Aegean; on the other hand, it also brought an end to the generally ‘friendly’ relationships which were a specific operational feature of the local network in the Early Bronze Age.

The long-established indigenous system of long-distance supplies of raw materials and artefacts, including metals, was totally overthrown. A possible explanation for these developments could well be the superiority of Mycenaean and eastern Mediterranean naval technology, as their long-distance ships were no match for the small indigenous coastal vessels (which is not unlike what happened in other and later situations: Broodbank 2000: 21). Relations with the indigenous communities of the mainland also became increasingly hostile, and it may well be that the broken economic relationships became the background to the well-known ‘Ausonian’ invasion of the islands from the southern Tyrrhenian mainland coast some 200 years later (Cavalier 2004).

The intensified Mycenaean and Cypriot/eastern Mediterranean presence hinged on the recognition of Sicily’s potential for creating and maintaining trade activities, as it could provide an actual territorial base, unlike mainland Italy. Thapsos, and possibly some other sites on the eastern and southern coasts of Sicily, may indeed have become integrated in the much broader international Mediterranean

trade system. In this new situation, the Aeolian islands probably just fulfilled the specific function of procuring metal and other resources from central and northern Italy. A group of discarded bronze artefacts from the Acropolis of Lipari that possibly represent a founder's hoard may illustrate this well, as they include Thapsos–Milazzese and Italian Middle and Recent Bronze Ages (Peschiera-type) artefacts alongside fragments of oxhide ingots (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1968: 733–89; Moschetta 1988).

Overall, as far as Sicily is concerned, it is worth noting that instances of both cultural homogeneity and hybridization of foreign and local practices are found across the island, as is best demonstrated by the collective tholos-type tombs, despite the consistent Aegean and eastern Mediterranean focus on the east and south coasts.

The Late and Final Bronze Ages and the Early Iron Age (Thirteenth–Ninth Centuries BC)

New developments in the Late Bronze Age involved both Sicily and the Aeolian islands, and marked the end of an important element of Mediterranean east–west relationships, as the islands lost their function as a basis for the Aegean presence in the central Mediterranean. The main reason was a new connection to mainland Italy that rapidly emerged in the thirteenth century BC and that privileged eastern and central Sicily. The net result was that Sicily largely lost its role as a connecting factor in the Mediterranean.

The Late Bronze Age on Lipari and in Northeast Sicily: Ausonian I (ca. 1250–1050 BC).

The label ‘Ausonian I’ was first used by Bernabò Brea (1957) to refer to the Late Bronze Age *facies* at Lipari. He coined it in reference to the historical tradition of the invasion of Sicily from the Italian mainland led by Auson, son of Aeolus (Diodorus Siculus 5.7). Around the mid-thirteenth century

BC, and within a rather short time span, all the Milazzese sites of the Aeolian islands were either destroyed or abandoned; only Lipari itself remained inhabited. The catastrophe extended to the Milazzese settlements in northeast Sicily (Cavalier [2004](#)).

Archaeological evidence indicates that it was the result of a planned hostile action that originated on the Calabrian coast, even if the actual events and actions inevitably escape us. It seems nevertheless likely that the speed and focus of the movement from the Italian coast could only have been realized if a substantial number of indigenous communities in Calabria had come together to take a joint decision and see it through. Bringing together a large group of people from these communities and procuring boats to cross the Tyrrhenian were indispensable for carrying out the decision. From an indigenous mainland perspective, it is also very likely that a large gathering of politically autonomous communities contributed much to strengthen their own cultural identity and political organization.

In archaeological and stratigraphic terms, the end of the Milazzese settlement on Lipari Acropolis is defined by an extensive fire that totally destroyed the site. A new settlement, made up of the same kinds of oval and rectangular structures as before, was nevertheless created in the same area. The archaeological *facies* of this site – the Ausonian I – is, however, radically different from the preceding local Milazzese, as the pottery shows characteristic Subapennine features from the Italian mainland, in particular plastic protrusions on rims and handles of open forms. The presence of some imported Mycenaean pottery (LH IIIB and C) and local vessels of Sicilian Pantalica type, such as askoi and ovoid jugs (Tusa [1999](#): 556, fig. 2 bottom) nevertheless suggest that some of the pre-existing connections were maintained. The Ausonian I sites in northeast Sicily (Albanese Procelli [2003](#): 31) include a cremation cemetery at Milazzo that looks like a typical Protovillanovan urnfield in terms of both ritual and funerary outfits and that may be dated to the twelfth and

eleventh centuries BC (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1959) (see [Figure 5.11](#)). In the final Ausonian I layers at Lipari, a handful of Protovillanovan pottery fragments (the successor to the Subapennine on the mainland) show that the connection with the Italian mainland was maintained, although there are also the first hints of a specifically local development, which will develop into the Ausonian II. The Ausonian I settlement at Lipari was destroyed by fire around the mid-eleventh century BC. Once again, the settlement was rebuilt in the same area.



Figure 5.11. Late Bronze Age 'Ausonian I' burial urns and grave goods of Italian mainland-type from the cremation cemetery of Milazzo (Messina; after Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1959: pl. xxxvi) (not to scale).

The Late Bronze Age in Sicily: The Early Pantalica Culture (Thirteenth–Eleventh Centuries BC)

During this period, radical changes emerge in the international seaborne trade system. By the thirteenth century BC, the main base of the central Mediterranean system began to move from Sicily to Sardinia, as the bulk of trading and further expansion was increasingly led by the eastern Mediterranean participants, while the Aegean role gradually faded. The most important activities also involved the Mediterranean far west and were based in Sardinia. From the end of this period, the role of Sicily in the international trade system was subordinate to that of Sardinia.

Throughout the Late Bronze Age, the Pantalica culture continued the local, long-established tradition of integration with Aegean groups who were still present and active in Sicily. The main change was a gradual shift from the east coast towards the interior, while the focus of the eastern Mediterranean connection moved from the east to the south coast.

The beginnings of Pantalica probably overlapped with the final phase of the Thapsos–Milazzese *facies*, as Thapsos types frequently turn up in early Pantalica contexts. There is also an overall continuity in form and possibly in function of ceremonial vessels, in the formal features of the bronze weapons and in funerary rituals and structures. The Pantalica culture is mainly documented by the excavations and publications of Paolo Orsi, which are now supplemented by some recent evidence. In east and central Sicily, the major centres of Pantalica, Caltagirone and Dessucri are all located at some distance from the coast in naturally defended positions; they control relatively small territories (Tusa 1999: 575–76). Pantalica is located on a plateau in the Anapo valley, but the only known settlement feature is the so-called *anaktoron*, a rectangular ashlar structure that may have included a metallurgical workshop (Bernabò Brea 1990). The main feature of the site are several large cemeteries of common Sicilian type which, as noted by Orsi and confirmed by a recent survey (Leighton 2011), included up to 5000 *grotticella* tombs (cemetery of Pantalica) dug into the slopes of the plateau. They date from the Late Bronze

Age to the beginning of the Greek colonization ([Figure 5.12](#)). The tombs are mostly small circular rooms, but there are also some larger ones with more rooms. The majority contained multiple inhumations. The cemeteries of Caltagirone, situated in the interior between the east and south coasts, include as many as 1000 *grotticelle*, often with the ogival (pointed) profile imitating the tholos ([Figure 5.13](#)). The main cemetery is that of Montagna di Caltagirone (Tanasi [2008b](#)). The third site is Monte Dessueri, set on the steep hill of Monte Maio in the Gela valley at a short distance from the coast. Around 1500 *grotticelle* are distributed over the three cemeteries of Monte Canalotti, Monte Dessueri and Fastucheria (Panvini [1997](#)).



Figure 5.12. View of Late Bronze Age Pantalica, showing the entrances to a group of *grotticella* tombs dug in the limestone cliff of the settlement plateau (after Tusa 1988: fig. p. 76).

The funerary assemblages from the Pantalica sites are dominated by elegant red lustrous pottery, along with bronze artefacts such as fibulae of Italian types (violin-bow, stilted, arch with two knots and plain arch), mirrors, knives, razors and weapons. Gold rings, which probably marked paramount political roles, are considered to be of Mycenaean inspiration. The formal features of early Pantalica material culture show the integration of Aegean and eastern Mediterranean elements, which was a specific

feature of the Thapsos culture. Although imported vessels are absent, with the possible exception of a sole LH IIIC jug from Pantalica, the overall repertoire is nevertheless close to Mycenaean IIIB and C and Cypriot shapes (Figure 5.14). The majority of early Pantalica pottery is moreover wheel-turned (Leighton 1999: 174, fig. 92; Tanasi 2005, pl. 130). The bronze weapons are generally considered to be of Aegean–Cypriot inspiration.

Shapes of Mycenaean imitation
related to North Pantalica culture



Contemporary Mycenaean
prototypes



Figure 5.14. Late Bronze Age pottery from Pantalica (left)

and Mycenaean pottery shapes (right; after Tanasi [2008](#): pl. 22) (not to scale).

An Aegean or Cypriot origin or model is also considered plausible for the circular mirrors, whereas the fibula series probably derived from Italian Recent and Final Bronze Ages metal production: the earliest form is the violin-bow fibula with two knots among the most popular Peschiera (Recent Bronze Age) types that was widely distributed over the entire Italian mainland, while the successive stilted type is a specific product of Final Bronze Age metallurgy from southern Etruria that is found along the central and southern Tyrrhenian coasts. A transitional violin bow–stilted arch fibula comes from the cremation cemetery of Milazzo (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier [1959](#): 33, fig. 1).

Other sites of the Pantalica *facies* in southern Sicily include the settlement of Sabucina in the Salso valley and the Sant'Angelo Muxaro cemetery in the Platani valley. In central and west Sicily, the site of Mokarta in the Fiume Grande valley (Salemi, Trapani) is the local version of the Pantalica *facies*: the settlement is divided into two areas called Cresta di Gallo in the east and Castello della Mokarta, and had first been established in the Middle Bronze Age. There are also two small cemeteries (Mannino and Spatafora [1995](#)). The village of Scirinda (Agrigento) similarly continued to be inhabited from the Middle Bronze Age into the Pantalica phase, which is documented by rectangular buildings. In the cemetery of Anguilla in the Corno valley, chamber tombs with rounded or ogival (tholos) vaults and long corridors can largely be attributed to the local Pantalica *facies* (Alonghi and Gullì [2009](#)). Grave goods include much early Pantalica material and some early Iron Age material. Tomb 15, for example, contained a four-handled jar of Caltagirone type and two gold rings. At Mokarta, a few bronzes and pottery, of Thapsos and mostly Pantalica types, are known from the Cresta di Gallo settlement area. The *grotticella* tombs include both the plain and the tholos types ([Figure 5.13](#)). The basic pottery and bronze forms of the Mokarta *facies* (Mannino and Spatafora [1995](#), fig. 34) are

very similar to the late Thapsos–Pantalica tradition, as are the architectural features of the *grotticelle* and the occasional presence of gold rings.

From a diachronic perspective, the Thapsos–Milazzese period (Middle Bronze Age) was the period of maximum Aegean integration with local Sicilian and Aeolian communities on both the islands, including the whole of Sicily. It coincided with a sharp separation from the nearby mainland of south Italy and the development of hostile relationships in the southern Tyrrhenian area. In the early Pantalica period (Late Bronze Age), the Aegean–indigenous relationships resulted in a process of cultural hybridization that was even more pronounced than in the Middle Bronze Age. The regional balance was, however, altered by two factors, as the Aeolian islands and northeast Sicily were no longer included and the continuing ‘Ausonian’ advance from east to central Sicily radically changed the island’s relationship with mainland Italy.

Conclusions: The End of the Islands’ Central Role in the Mediterranean

The archaeological record for the following period of the Final Bronze Age and early Iron Age is considerably more intricate than those seen in the Early Bronze Age and Middle Bronze Age, and it is therefore more difficult to fit it into a single coherent framework. I will briefly examine the overall fragmentation of Sicilian communities into local territorial entities with distinct types of material culture and possibly social and political organization. The initial episode of the ‘Ausonian’ takeover of Lipari and northeast Sicily in the thirteenth century BC and the continuing, if unsystematic, relationship with mainland Italy gave the fatal blow to Sicily’s fragile insularity.

The archaeological record that appeared at Lipari after the destruction of the Ausonian I settlement on the Acropolis has been labelled Ausonian II by Bernabò Brea and Cavalier (1960). It is an entirely new *facies*, which may be seen as the material correlate of the incorporation of local features

derived from the Sicilian Pantalica culture into the 'Ausonian' tradition, which is itself of mainland origin. The Ausonian groups show a continuing direct connection with the Italian mainland, as well as a hostile attitude towards the local Pantalica communities. Their presence in Sicily apparently consisted of a progressive advance from the east coast to the interior and the south. The main sites at Lipari are the Acropolis settlement and the cremation cemetery of Piazza Monfalcone, which have yielded bronzes and ornaments of Italian Protovillanovan type (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1960: 97–126). In Sicily, Ausonian sites with uninterrupted continuity from the end of the Bronze Age into the early Iron Age include the coastal site of Punta Castelluzzo (Siracusa), the settlement of Metapiccola (Lentini, Siracusa), the cemetery of Molino della Badia-Madonna del Piano (Catania) and the early Iron Age settlement and cemetery of Morgantina (Enna). The main Pantalica centres were also impacted by the advance, as Caltagirone came to an end around the same time as the nearby Ausonian cemetery of Madonna del Piano came into use. Sometime later in the early Iron Age, Ausonian features also became prevalent in the sites of Pantalica, Dessucri and Scirinda (Agrigento), which led Leighton (1996) to argue that the Ausonian advance produced a general decrease in social complexity and organization of Sicilian communities from chiefdom to tribe.

In a few sites on the east coast of Sicily that mostly date to the end of the Bronze Age, there is an association between pottery of local Thapsos–Pantalica tradition and a rich 'Ausonian' metal industry. These are Cassibile (Turco 2000) south of Siracusa, Thapsos and Cozzo del Pantano. Continuity of local Middle Bronze Age–Late Bronze Age traditions was confined to western Sicily and the Sant'Angelo Muxaro culture (Albanese Procelli 2003). In this area, the basic pottery repertoire and tholos-type chamber tombs, as well as important social and role markers such as the gold rings, remained in use from the early Iron Age into the Archaic period.

Final Remarks

A possible reason for the continuing Ausonian advance, which apparently spanned several centuries, may be found in a clash of cultural and ethnic identities. In terms of local memories and even epics, an event so exceptional as the invasion and destruction of the Aeolian settlements by invaders from the Italian coast is likely to have produced a permanent reinforcement of the identity of the communities involved and of their self-identification as structurally opposed to the Sicilian Pantalica groups. The fact that this episode of indigenous history was repeatedly reported by Greek historians seems to confirm that it was generally perceived as an event of prime importance. The archaeological evidence shows us quite clearly that the Ausonian movement also entailed significant economic implications, probably in relation to intensive mineral exploitation in Calabria: between the Final Bronze Age and the early Iron Age, the Sicilian metal industry of the Thapsos–Pantalica tradition was fully replaced by a new ‘Ausonian’ production, which had strong Calabrian links. The new industry introduced significant technical and functional changes throughout Sicily and resulted in a considerable quantitative increase in the use of metal artefacts in both ‘Ausonian’ and ‘local’ contexts.

The Ausonian connection probably coincided with the end of the Aegean presence in Sicily and the central Mediterranean around the twelfth–eleventh centuries BC. This is obviously a general phenomenon which involved the whole area and which is usually seen as a direct consequence of the crisis of the Mycenaean palaces and the Aegean Dark Age. It is nevertheless worth considering whether the end of Sicily’s role as a territorial resource for Aegean maritime trade was among the factors that produced the crisis.

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6 Late Bronze Age Sardinia: Acephalous Cohesion

Emma Blake

Abstract

The late second millennium BC on Sardinia is among the most dynamic and vital periods in the island's history, when Nuragic society undergoes massive changes. Proto-urban centers surrounding veritable fortresses, vast regional cult spaces, sophisticated metallurgy, and a complex circulation of Cypriot and Aegean goods and technologies attest to expanded political groupings and economic intensification. This period marks the apex of Nuragic society, and at the same time foreshadows this culture's fragmentation in the subsequent centuries. These precocious transformations, virtually unparalleled elsewhere in the central and western Mediterranean in this period, have typically been explained by either external pressures or internal ones: the former theories focus on the foreign demand for metals and influx of new goods, while the latter emphasize demographic growth or a shift in the Sardinian mindset from introversion to extroversion. Yet the picture that emerges from the material record is one that the standard internal/external binary applied to islands does little to explain: a bewildering blend of connectivity and isolation, cultural conservatism and social change, and the appropriation of new and recycled material forms. This chapter reexamines this perplexing period, drawing on the evidence of imports and the built environment to construct a picture of a still inward-turning society whose emergent elites were unsuccessful at overcoming a tradition of acephalous cohesion.

Introduction

Probably more than any other region in Italy, studies of Sardinia in the late second millennium BC emphasize overseas contacts, from finds of Baltic amber, metal objects of possible Cypriot and Iberian origin, and Mycenaean ceramics on the island (e.g., Lo Schiavo *et al.* 1985; Balmuth 1987; Tykot and Andrews 1992; Ridgway 2006). The picture of Sardinia in the Late and Final Bronze Ages as a cosmopolitan hub for visitors traveling east and west is in notable contrast to the preceding Early and Middle Bronze Ages on the island, when the virtual absence of imports and peculiar localized megalithism speak to an isolated and introspective culture. Through most of the second millennium BC, Sardinia was inhabited by an egalitarian society of farmer-pastoralists whose most remarkable gesture was to build for their dwellings massive conical dry-stone towers, the *nuraghi* (Figure 6.1). These constructions are generally understood to be the outcome of social competition in a closed insular environment, an ‘Easter Island’-type adaptive behavior (Patton 1996: 185).



Figure 6.1. Nuraghe Ruju (Filigosa; photograph by Peter van Dommelen).

By the Late Bronze Age (LBA, 1350–1100 BC: Lo Schiavo [2001](#): 131–33), not only does Sardinia seem involved in the pan-Mediterranean circulation of goods and peoples, but its population becomes increasingly stratified, and the stone towers, no longer simple farmsteads, are expanded in some cases to serve much larger communities, presumably under the direction of emerging elites. Webster ([1996](#): 111–25) proposed a three-tiered settlement hierarchy, with estimates of 5000 or so single tower *nuraghi*, another 2000 or so multi-towered structures (labeled Class II *nuraghi*), and just 14 known Class III settlements, vast complexes with many connected towers and an additional circuit of fortification

walls (Figure 6.2). While the distinctions in wealth suggested by the Class II settlements are in keeping with those observed in other areas of the central and western Mediterranean in the same period, the Class III settlements point to a level of social and political complexity with few parallels in the central and western Mediterranean. These two material phenomena, the emergence of a settlement hierarchy and the presence of imported objects, have drawn the attention of scholars studying the period (see most recently Russell 2010). What has proven difficult, however, is to connect the two phenomena (or rather two categories of phenomena) ‘on the ground,’ as the two are largely spatially distinct. The monumental Class III *nuraghi* are no more likely than other Nuragic settlements to yield finds of foreign objects, and the distributions of exotica do not cluster in the region where most Class III *nuraghi* are found (see Russell 2010: fig. 6.2). This article reexamines this perplexing period, using the evidence of several categories of imports to suggest first that the notion of an outward-looking island in the LBA has been overstated, and second that the emergent elites were unable to harness the new economic opportunities presented by foreign contacts.



Figure 6.2. Nuraghe Seruci (Gonnesa), a Class III *nuraghe* (photograph by Peter van Dommelen).

Nuragic Settlement and Society

The *nuraghi*, usually conical in form and several stories high when intact, are unevenly strewn around the island, with densities greatest in the hilly regions of the north-central zone. There are an estimated 7000 of them known. The earliest such towers emerge around 1800 BC, with construction peaking in the Middle Bronze Age, around 1500–1350 BC. The simple single tower *nuraghi* were residences, and their dispersed arrangement and loosely equivalent dimensions suggest an egalitarian society. The structures are varied enough in construction details that they seem to have been locally planned and built, probably involving the aid of neighbors (Trump 1991; cf. Lilliu 1988 and Webster 1996 for good overviews; and Usai 1995 for other possible explanations of the towers' function).

The multi-towered complexes emerge in the LBA, beginning around 1350 BC: of the estimated 7000 *nuraghi*, 2000 are complex. One or more towers were added to the original tower, with walls linking the towers together to form one large structure (Webster 1996: 112). A very small subset of these complex *nuraghi* have a further surrounding wall with additional towers enveloping the central structures: these are the Class III *nuraghi* (Webster 1996: 117). At least a few of the complex *nuraghi*, such as Nuraghe Arrubiu, were built from scratch, but most seem to have been expanded from single tower *nuraghi* over one or more phases of construction (Lo Schiavo and Sanges 1994: 69) (Figure 6.3). Nuraghe Su Nuraxi of Barumini, as interpreted by Lilliu (1955), constitutes the model of this multiphase construction process, against which the chronologies of other *nuraghi* are compared. Many *nuraghi* of all types had surrounding villages of huts by the LBA. Both the Class II and Class III *nuraghi* contribute to the picture of an increasingly complex society in a period of demographic growth. These changes in settlement are accompanied by an influx of new pottery and metal objects, and the appearance of regional-scale cult sites. Lo Schiavo (2001: 134) has labeled the agglomerations of *nuraghi*, '*nuraghe-less villages*,' and other monuments as '*nuclei*,' the members of which communally controlled the natural resources of the surrounding territory. These arrangements speak to a tribal

society and a decentralized territorial system. However, in the southern portion of the island, the settlement pattern is different. With only one exception, the Class III settlements are located there, on lands with the agricultural potential to support larger populations than the uplands of the central and northern zones (Webster 1996: 131). The Class III settlements, by their size and given the labor entailed in their construction, suggest some sort of regional authority. Webster (1996: 131–32; fig. 52) has constructed Thiessen polygons for each of the Class III settlements and shown that they are at least 10 km apart, with hypothetical territories of 200 km or more, containing hundreds of smaller settlements and ritual sites. Webster (1996: 131) estimates the population of each of these polities to have been in the tens of thousands.



Figure 6.3. Nuraghe Arrubiu (Orroli; photograph by Peter van Dommelen).

That much is broadly accepted. Less understood are the sources of the wealth and social power evident in the Class III settlements. Giardino (1995) sees the concentration of these large settlements near the Iglesiente mining region in the southwest as purposeful, but the extensive traces of metalworking and finds of local copper bun ingots at Nuragic settlements of all sizes, not just at the Class III sites, make the claim that these Class III occupants controlled the

metal industry hard to support. Rather, the LBA metalworking industry on the island was apparently decentralized, with myriad local production sites at various *nuraghi* and sanctuaries. Further support for the theory of an acephalous industry comes from the extreme variability in the elemental composition of the locally produced plano-convex ingots. This variability suggests a nonstandardized smelting process, with each site making its own decisions (Stech 1989: 41). Thus, even in this period when social stratification is evident, the residents of individual *nuraghi* seem to have maintained considerable autonomy in metallurgical production.

If the industry itself was not controlled by regional authorities, one might reasonably expect the control of imported raw materials to be a source of power. Local copper and lead were abundant, but copper may nevertheless have been imported, in the form of oxhide ingots discussed in the section Copper Oxhide Ingots below, and as yet there is no evidence that the few local cassiterite tin sources were exploited. Instead, it appears that tin was imported to the island and added to the local copper (Valera and Valera 2003). As for the possibility that copper was imported, none of the Class III settlements has yielded oxhide ingots or tin, although there are 32 known find spots on the island; it should be noted that only a few sites have yielded tin anyway (see Lo Schiavo 2003a). Nor can other imports have been the basis for the power of these settlements: Aegean sherds have been discovered at just 3 of the 14 Class III *nuraghi*. Put another way, the Class III *nuraghi* amount to 18% of the 16 find spots of Aegean sherds on the island (Russell 2010: 110; and see Vianello 2005 for a complete gazetteer of find spots of Aegean materials). While this percentage is far higher than the ratio of Class III *nuraghi* to *nuraghi* overall, when we consider the Class III towers as a portion of the couple hundred excavated *nuraghi*, the 18% becomes less remarkable. Likewise, amber is found at some Class III settlements but turns up in many other sites as well (Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006). To conclude, while it is in the Class III *nuraghi* that one would expect to find the highest numbers of the presumably valuable commodities of

the day – imports and metals, this is not the case. As Webster (1996: 142) noted, it is not yet possible on present evidence to demonstrate any close relationship between settlement size, proximity to native ore sources, metallurgical production, and trade activity. Some coastal sites have rich ceramic imports and little metal (Antigori, Sa Domu 'e S'Orku), while other sites have rich metallurgical output and few if any ceramic imports (Funtana), irrespective of size.

Webster proposed that the basis of wealth and power in Nuragic Sardinia cannot have been control of metals or exotica. Instead, he saw wealth derived from labor and livestock, drawing on the similarities in the layout of complex *nuraghi* to the southern African kraals and associated settlements with livestock-based economies (Webster 1996: 125–28). This theory has implications for more than just the Class III settlements: I would posit that some combination of farming and stock-raising constituted the basis of the Nuragic economy everywhere, and that the island was no more 'extroverted' in the LBA than it had ever been. When we look more closely at the distributions of the imports, this theory finds further support.

Late Bronze Age Imports to Sardinia

On Sardinia in the LBA and Final Bronze Age (FBA, 1100–900 BC), foreign goods arriving on the coast penetrated far into the interior. Indeed, many of the imports, including the oldest known Mycenaean import to the island, an alabastron from Nuraghe Arrubiu (Orroli), are from inland sites, not coastal ones. A glance at the map demonstrates that the imports, far from accumulating at the coast and trickling in progressively thinner streams toward the interior, show no preference for coastal sites. The only exception to this is Nuraghe Antigori (Sarroch) in the south (Ferrarese Ceruti 1986). It is located on a hill overlooking a good natural harbor. As the structure is partly built into the hilltop and poorly preserved at the top, its original form is difficult to make out, but with five intact towers and other ancillary structures surrounded by stretches of wall, its categorization

as a Class III settlement seems warranted (Lilliu 1988: 399–401). It has yielded the largest assemblage of Aegean-type pottery on the island, dating to LH IIIB and LH IIIC, with pieces provenanced to Crete, the northeast Peloponnese, and of local production (Jones and Day 1987). The island's first piece of iron was found at Antigori, as well as the only Cypriot pottery there. Among all the sites on Sardinia, it thus comes closest to the picture of a node in the intensive maritime trading network of the end of the second millennium BC in the Mediterranean. For mainland Italy, Vagnetti has drawn a triple distinction between the internationally oriented coastal trading centers where Cypriot pottery is found, the inland settlements where it is not, and those that have yielded only isolated examples of Aegean-type sherds, more often than not locally made imitations (Vagnetti 2001: 88). In southern Italy, the coastal centers were at the top of the settlement hierarchy in terms of size, monumentality, and quantities of foreign and other luxury objects (Affuso and Lorusso 2006). How does this compare with Sardinia? This penetration of Sardinia's interior could be read as evidence of the rootedness of the foreign imports. However, given the absence of powerful coastal settlements, it may mean quite the opposite: the goods moved to the interior precisely because the economy was not structured around them. The agricultural interior was the source of wealth. Regardless of the mechanisms of trade on LBA Sardinia, that is, whether the foreign traders moved the goods inland themselves, or there were middlemen, or locals responsible for the overland transport, goods must have moved toward demand. So the conclusion we must draw is that unlike southern Italy, wealth was not concentrated along the coast. This can only mean that foreign exchanges were of minor importance to the Sardinian economy.

Further, there is little overlap in the distributions of imports. Lo Schiavo attributes the distinct distributions of Mycenaean pottery and Cypriot metals – the former primarily in the south and the latter spread all over the island – to the actions of the foreign visitors: she suggests that the Cypriots became more integrated into Nuragic

society, whereas the Mycenaeans merely used Sardinia as a stopping-off point, perhaps on the way to Iberia (Lo Schiavo 2004: 379). But from what we know of Bronze Age trade in the Mediterranean, which seems to have been primarily maritime with goods exchanged at coastal sites, it seems far more likely that the differing distributions inland are a function of local relations and local economies (see Manning and Hulin 2005: 280–82). Therefore, the disparities in distribution suggest, much like the disparities in metallurgical production, that the circulation of foreign goods proceeded in a localized and nonstandardized manner.

How are clusters of interactions visible from the archaeological record? It is generally very difficult to calculate the flows of local interactions in prehistory. We are largely restricted to exchanges of objects rather than of peoples or ideas, and exchanges over short distances are even harder to detect. Among the kinds of goods that would circulate locally, perishables such as foodstuffs are rarely retrieved archaeologically, and in the case of pottery, microregional differences in clay sources are unknown in most areas. Here is where the imports come in handy: they can be treated as evidence of localized interactions when they turn up at inland sites, not just as indices of foreign contacts.

In the LBA and FBA, imports reaching Sardinia may be grouped into several major categories: Aegean imports and imitations, Cypriot-style goods (both ceramics and metals), amber, and Iberian imports. For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on the best provenanced and best dated of these materials, the Aegean-style pots, the copper oxhide ingots, and two amber bead types – the Tiryns and Allumiere beads. Linking the various categories of materials is a challenge. The bulk of the Aegean pots date to the thirteenth and early twelfth centuries BC, which is contemporary with the few Cypriot ceramics on the island, and both are concentrated in the south (Vagnetti 2001: 78–80; Jones *et al.* 2005: 541). The Cypriot-style metals, for which it is virtually impossible to confirm if they are imported or locally made, belong to the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC, with some objects

dating to the tenth century BC (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 1985: 63). While some Cypriot-style oxhide ingots have been found in the south, they cluster more in the central zone. The Tiryns and Allumiere beads date to the twelfth century BC but do not overlap spatially with the other imports (Cultraro 2006: 1543–44). The Iberian metals belong to the eleventh and tenth centuries BC (Lo Schiavo 1999: 506; 2003b: 159). It seems that we have the remnants of at least four distinct sets of interactions, preventing any easy generalizations about the nature of extra-insular contacts. Instead, we can use the distributions of these different groups of goods to highlight local social interactions on Sardinia (Lo Schiavo 1999; 2003a and 2003b; Lo Schiavo *et al.* 1985).

Aegean Objects

Aegean imports consist primarily of Mycenaean pottery. Mycenaean-style pots are known from 16 sites on the island (at last count, Lo Schiavo 2003b: fig. 2), totaling fewer than 100 sherds, both imported and locally produced (Figure 6.4). Of these, more than 50 sherds come from the site of Nuraghe Antigori alone. The above-mentioned alabastron that is the earliest imported Mycenaean vessel dates to the thirteenth century BC (LH IIIA2; Lo Schiavo and Sanges 1994: 68–70). The rest of the Aegean sherds date to LH IIIB and LH IIIC (Jones *et al.* 2005: 541). Open forms make up 61% of the finds, with bowls and cups prevailing (Vianello 2005: 45; table 8). Archaeometric analyses have determined that the Mycenaean wares on Sardinia are about evenly split between imports and local products (Jones *et al.* 2005: 540; see also Jones and Day 1987). Among the imports, just under two-thirds are from the Peloponnese, the rest from Crete (Jones *et al.* 2005: pl. CXXa). As for the local imitations, the quantities of sherds at Antigori make it likely that production took place there (Jones *et al.* 2005: pl. CXXIb). In addition to the 16 find spots of pottery, at a site near Decimoputzu, an ivory figurine of a miniature warrior head with boar's tusk helmet was almost certainly carved in the Aegean. The head, of hippopotamus tooth, dates to LH IIIA2–B, based on comparanda (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 157). The Mycenaean imports do not indicate what the Mycenaeans

were after. Although the Mycenaean find spots on Sardinia cluster in the southern part of the island, their distribution does not seem linked to the copper sources in any obvious way (*contra* Ridgway 2006: 301–302; see also Russell 2010: fig. 6.2). Nor is there any overlap between sites showing evidence of extensive metalworking or with many metal finds, and ones with Aegean sherds (Webster 1996: 142).

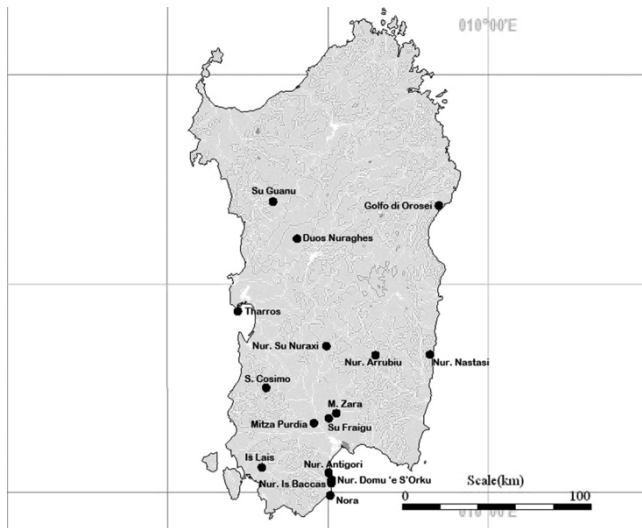


Figure 6.4. Map of Sardinia showing find spots of Aegean pottery (prepared by Emma Blake).

As for their impact, the Mycenaean pots on Sardinia cannot be linked directly to the emergence of an elite on the island. First, the numbers are fairly low. Second, Mycenaean pots are found at *nuraghi* of all classes, not just the complex ones. The alabastron from Nuraghe Arrubiu was found just beneath the foundations of the *nuraghe*, presumably as part of a foundation offering. The *nuraghe*, covering 3000 sq m and with its five surrounding towers, is one of the biggest on the island (Lo Schiavo and Sanges 1994). Someone already had the means to build such a massive monument when the pot was deposited: the moment of construction and the placement of the pot is a culmination of a process of change, not the beginning, and the Mycenaean pot cannot be understood as a catalyst.

What the Aegean sherds' distribution does suggest is a network of interactions linking a large swathe of the southern part of the island known as the Campidano Plain, including sites of all sizes, but not extending much beyond it. Presumably the pots arrived at Antigori or were made there, and then moved inland, but only so far. With a couple exceptions, the cutoff seems to be at the transition to the upland regions, suggesting not the boundaries of a polity but rather a regional grouping perhaps derived from similar economies and topography.

Copper Oxhide Ingots

The copper oxhide ingots undoubtedly constitute the most famous of the island's imports, if that is indeed what they are. These objects have been found at 32 sites on Sardinia (Figure 6.5) (Jones 2007: 429). While oxhide ingots were made over several centuries in different places, the Sardinian examples, all very late in the production sequence (twelfth and eleventh centuries BC), have been posited by some scholars to be of Cypriot origin. The proposed ore sources for the ingots from 1250 BC on are the northwest foothills of the Troodos mountains, based on a lead isotope signature that is consistent with the copper deposits there (Gale and Stos-Gale 1999). While this provenance has found acceptance among a few scholars (e.g., Lo Schiavo 2006: 1321; and see Kassianidou 2001 for a nuanced evaluation of the evidence), many others are not convinced, given the widely recognized problems with lead isotope analysis for copper sourcing (e.g., Budd *et al.* 1995; Knapp 2000: 36–47). Among those who favor a Cypriot origin for the ingots, Lo Schiavo (2003b: 161) suggests that the oxhide ingots may have constituted 'anchorage dues,' as the Cypriots stopped off on their way to Iberia, although the absence of any confirmed contemporary Cypriot import in Iberia makes this explanation highly contentious. Perhaps the issue is not so significant after all: Gale and Stos-Gale (1987: 162) have calculated that the number of imported ingots to Sardinia may amount to no more than one shipload. This hardly constitutes an ongoing supply that warrants explaining. Even

if they were not imported from Cyprus but were either made locally or imported from elsewhere, the form itself is evidence of Sardinia's participation in the Mediterranean-wide metals trade, and so is a testament to foreign contacts.

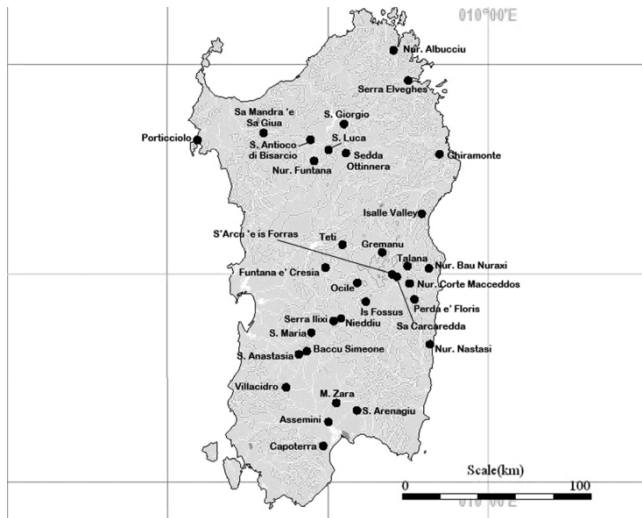


Figure 6.5. Map of Sardinia showing find spots of copper oxhide ingots (prepared by Emma Blake).

At only two Sardinian sites have the ingots been found intact, and both were inland sites. Serra Ilixi (Nuragus), more than 40 km from the coast, yielded five intact oxhide ingots. Sant'Antioco di Bisarcio, 30 km from the coast, had two intact ones (Lo Schiavo 2006: 1329). More than 95 others, from the remaining 30 sites, were found in fragmentary form. For the most part, the ingot fragments turn up in hoards at *nuraghi*, villages, and cult sites, although in the case of the early discoveries, the term 'hoard' was applied very loosely indeed, so those contexts are questionable (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 158). Kassianidou (2001: 105) notes the ingots' association with metallurgical tools at probable workshop contexts as proof of their practical use, but the lead isotopic signatures of the ingots are not consistent with those of any finished bronze artifacts on the island. Those bronze objects that have been analyzed have lead isotope signatures indicating that they were made of Sardinian copper (Gale and Stos Gale 1987: 154–55). This

could mean that, on Sardinia, the oxhide ingots were not considered convertible material in a standardized form to be melted down to make other products (Muhly 1996). A more likely explanation is that local lead, added to the copper along with the tin in the alloying process, disguised the isotopic signature of the small original traces of lead in the ingots (Begemann *et al.* 2001: 74; Kassianidou 2001: 106–107). Even if some ingots were melted down and used though, there were clearly portions of many that remained out of circulation. This has led some scholars to suggest a symbolic or religious significance for them. Lo Schiavo (2003a: 121), for example, suggests that the Abini ‘hoard’ may in fact have been troves of votive offerings from a sanctuary that was overlooked in the looting entailed in its discovery. The Nuraghe Albucciu hoard, whose composition does not resemble either a trader’s hoard or a founder’s hoard, was also likely a votive hoard (Begemann *et al.* 2001: 62–65). Furthermore, the ingot fragments’ presence at sanctuaries and their preservation in later early Iron Age (EIA) contexts may indicate ritual significance. Perhaps the two functions were not mutually exclusive: there is some evidence that foundries were attached to sanctuaries, as the finds from the sanctuaries of S’Arcu ‘e is Forros (Villagrande Strisaili) and Sant’Anastasia (Sardara) suggest (Ugas and Usai 1987; Lo Schiavo 2003a: 124). From that perspective, perhaps the high numbers of oxhide ingot fragments on Sardinia are evidence not of relatively large quantities reaching the island, but rather of relatively large quantities that were not melted down. This added significance may explain the ingots’ surprising presence in later contexts. They were preserved in hoards and cult sites on the island for centuries after they were made and presumably reached there.

The other metals of Cypriot type on Sardinia also date to the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC. In the absence of any provenancing other than stylistic, that they are imports cannot be confirmed, so we can at best observe that the objects are Cypriot in style. Whether imported or locally made, their contemporaneity with the ingots suggests a period of intensified contacts with Cypriots in the twelfth

and eleventh centuries BC (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 1985: 63). Unfortunately, the finished metals are mostly from unprovenanced contexts. These objects include weapons such as daggers, accessories and furnishings such as mirrors and stands, and, particularly intriguingly, the complete complement of smithing tools – hammers, tongs, and shovels (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 159). These tools, together with the Sardinian adoption of Cypriot metalworking techniques such as casting molds, suggest influences of a very different nature than the Mycenaean materials or earlier Cypriot pots bear witness to, and the differential distributions bear this out. Lo Schiavo (2001: 141) suggests that Cypriot metalworkers may have stayed on the island seasonally, leaving behind the products of their knowledge but no material traces of a permanent presence. Without supporting evidence, this theory is necessarily highly speculative. Whatever the nature of the Cypriot influence, the Sardinian smiths branched off on their own to produce a vibrant repertoire of objects (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 159). Matthäus (2001) argues that the Cypriot-style objects are indeed imports and that these continued to reach the island as late as the tenth and ninth centuries BC, although by then reduced to prestige goods rather than utilitarian tools, as EIA Cypriot pieces from the Sant’Anastasia well temple indicate (Ridgway 2006). Without further metal provenancing studies, the discussion remains conjectural, beyond observing that clearly Cyprus and Sardinia had contacts for a time, intensifying in the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC.

Lo Schiavo (1999: 508) finds the thorough distribution of the ingot fragments surprising, noting ‘The capillary nature of the penetration and diffusion of finds seems inconsistent with what we know about the structure of Nuragic society in the Final Bronze Age’ (my translation). Yet in light of the theory that wealth in Sardinia was derived from labor and livestock, not metals and trade, we would expect objects of value to penetrate the interior. The ingots are found in a wide zigzagging band from the northwest zone to the east central zone and the south (Figure 6.5), and their distribution, by whatever means, demonstrates the

magnetism of interior sites. In their circulation, presumably some were melted down and others resignified as noncirculating inalienable objects. The ingots' initial dispersal may have helped to reinforce regional networks across distances. Chapman's (2000) study of the social significance of the dispersal of fragmented objects in the Neolithic and Copper Age Balkans resonates here. Chapman argued that this fragmentation was deliberate, and that it was part of a strategy of creating enchained social relationships between peoples in a collectively oriented society (see Braun and Plog 1982 and Talalay 1987 for earlier discussions). Drawing on Chapman's model, if the ingots' inalienability had to do with a perceived sacredness, it was one whose power was shared, not restricted, and may have served to promote connections between people. The ingots are also thought to have been sacred in Cyprus, but in a different way. There, the ingots came to be associated with the exclusive control of the metallurgical industry as practiced by the elites, embodied in the figurine of the so-called 'Ingot God' from Enkomi (Knapp 1986). In the Sardinian case, the ingots seem to have operated in quite the opposite manner, passing fluidly through nonelite hands.

Amber Imports

Amber beads are found in the hundreds at Nuragic sanctuaries and in tombs on Sardinia (Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006: fig. 6). While the material is indisputably imported, whether the beads arrived as finished products or were worked locally is a matter of debate. Lo Schiavo (2003b: 157) asserts that in some cases the beads were produced locally from imported amber, and in other cases the beads themselves were imported. Negroni Catacchio *et al.* (2006: 1461) see the distinction as chronological, suggesting that prior to the Iron Age, amber circulated as finished objects rather than as unworked material to be processed at many sites. The matter is not helped by the difficulties in dating most of the beads with any accuracy. Limiting the study to the Tiryns and Allumiere beads helps to focus the discussion, although the low numbers of these particular types underrepresent the actual quantities of amber on the island.

The Tiryns beads are subcylindrical with a ridge around the central part. The Allumiere beads are cylindrical with grooves encircling them. Their shapes can range from squat to narrow (Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006: 1460). The lack of formal standardization suggests multiple production centers, but again it is unclear if any were in fact made on Sardinia. The two bead types are often found together (Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006: 1460). The contexts of the finds for the Tiryns and Allumiere beads in Greece strongly point to a date of LH IIIC, with the earliest examples dating to the early part of this period and the latest to Final LH IIIC, with their production and circulation ceasing in the sub-Mycenaean period (Cultraro 2006: 1543–44). In the west, Sardinia has among the highest concentrations of the Tiryns and Allumiere beads (Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006: 1460). It is still debated where the beads were produced. As no Tiryns and Allumiere beads are found near the Baltic, it seems unlikely that they were worked and distributed from there. With Greece at the center of the distribution map of these objects, it seems likely that they were made there and then fanned out to the west and east (Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006: 1461–63).

Regardless of their place of origin, what is of interest here is how they functioned on Sardinia. Nine of the 13 find spots on the island are in the interior (Figure 6.6). While this preference for the interior mirrors the distribution of the ingots, the mechanisms for the beads' arrival on the island seem to have been quite different from those of the other imports discussed already. The beads show no preference for the south coast and were probably not reaching the island via Nuraghe Antigori. Nor do the find spots map easily onto those of the Cypriot-style ingots: although the beads cluster in the northwest and east central parts of the island along with the ingots, the two imports have only two shared find spots. The density of similar beads in west central and northern Italy suggests that the amber reached Sardinia from its Baltic source by way of the Tyrrhenian from the Italian peninsula, rather than directly from Greece or Cyprus (see Negroni Catacchio *et al.* 2006: fig. 8 for possible routes).

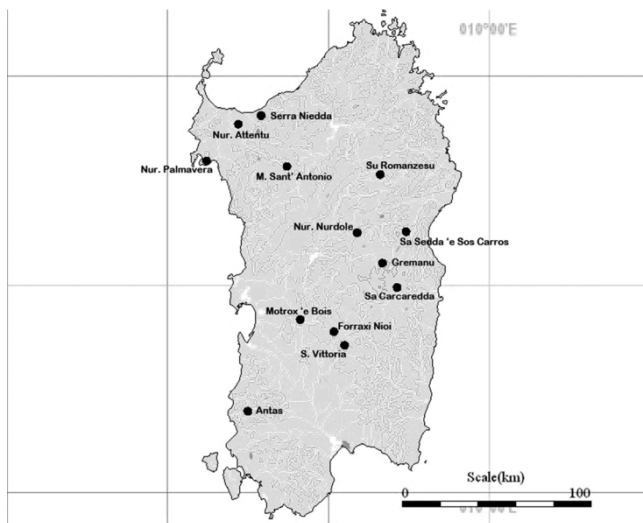


Figure 6.6. Map of Sardinia showing find spots of Tiryns and Allumiere amber beads (prepared by Emma Blake).

Discussion: External Contacts and Internal Cleavages

These imports thus demonstrate spatial and temporal clustering. Spatially, some of these clusters map understandably onto traversable lowlands such as the fertile Campidano Plain linking Cagliari and Oristano. Others, such as the cluster of ingots in the high altitude Gennargentu Mountains, can hardly be ascribed to ease of mobility (although see Riva [1997: 79](#) on the facility of interaction in mountainous regions). Reconstructing the mechanisms by which these goods reached Sardinia is a challenge. First, there were the Mycenaean imports to the south of the island, with the Cypriot pots likely arriving with those. Not only are the Cypriot pots found at Nuraghe Antigori, the site with the most Mycenaean material, but in at least one case, a Mycenaean import to the island has its closest parallel in Cyprus: a rhyton from Antigori, dating to LH IIIB1, has a twin from Enkomi (Lo Schiavo *et al.* [1985](#)). The Sicilian site of Thapsos shows a similar combination of Cypriot and

Aegean pottery from this period. Whether the traders who brought these goods were Mycenaeans or Cypriots remains open to debate. These visits must have been followed by a separate phase of Cypriot influence in the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC, the circumstances of which are less clear because of the problems of securely identifying the provenance of the objects in question. Roughly contemporary with this second wave of Cypriot influence, but apparently unrelated to it, amber imports were reaching the east coast of the island from the Italian mainland, as they may have done for centuries. Finally, Sardinia participated in multilateral interactions in the eleventh and tenth centuries BC with the Atlantic, mainland Europe, and the East, although the mechanisms for these remain unclear.

The sporadic influx of exotica must have been greeted with considerable enthusiasm by the Nuragic peoples, but only the Cypriot contacts of the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC can be said to have had a lasting impact – in this case on Sardinian metalworking technology. The Sardinians absorbed metallurgical methods and forms from the Cypriots in a process Lo Schiavo (2003b: 161) has called ‘cultural osmosis.’ But one piece of evidence suggests the Sardinians and Cypriots operated in distinct object worlds: the treatment of the oxhide ingots points to a radically different valorization of these goods, one that was due not to supply but to a cultural framework that granted certain objects an amuletic quality. Further evidence, though indirect, may come from the miniature pilgrim’s flasks: these seem to be local copies of Cypriot or North Syrian four-handled round or ovoid vessels dating to the twelfth to tenth centuries BC. No originals have turned up on the island, but the form is distinctive enough to make the identification plausible. The miniature bronze flasks have been found exclusively in Nuragic sanctuaries in FBA and EIA contexts and, interestingly, in EIA graves in Etruria (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 154–55). Lo Schiavo interprets the miniatures as evidence of the special reverence in which the full-size vessels were held, possibly due to their contents, now unknown. I would suggest further that these fetishized objects become uniquely Nuragic in their miniature forms. As I have argued

elsewhere (Blake 1997), LBA and FBA Sardinia elites were not above manipulating symbols for their own ends, as in the case of the miniature multi-towered *nuraghi*. But the Cypriot elite's interleaving of divinity and commodity, evident in their treatment of the oxhide ingots, is absent here. These distinct approaches to materiality may not have hindered interactions, but they must have mitigated their impact.

As for the Mycenaean materials, as we have seen, there is even less of a case to be made for influence. Webster argues for endogenous factors behind Sardinia's social changes in the LBA: higher population densities led to increased social and economic insecurity, opening a space for some individuals to gain a foothold over the rest of the population. Nuraghe Antigori's production of Aegean-style wares and elsewhere the adoption of metallurgical techniques seem to mark the limit of the borrowing from the Aegean. As Lo Schiavo (2003b: 161) argues, when discussing Sardinia's cultural elements, 'none of these bears any similarity to either the Atlantic or the Aegean and Cypriot worlds.' As for the involvement with peninsular Italy suggested by the amber imports, it is not until the EIA that the Nuragic objects in tombs in northern Etruria speak to close connections. Despite the evidence of extra-insular contacts, then, the Sardinians for one experienced little cultural change from them. Instead, we see new relationships with the material world emerging that point to internal social cleavages.

Sardinian goods leave the island in fairly limited quantities, although there is an intriguing corollary between Nuragic ceramic exports and oxhide ingot find sites, at Cannatello, Lipari, and Kommos. In the thirteenth century BC, Nuragic gray-ware pottery reached the site of Cannatello on the south coast of Sicily and the site of Kommos on Crete (De Miro 1999 for Cannatello; Watrous *et al.* 1998 for Kommos). At Kommos, the Nuragic pots were found spread across multiple structures in the settlement, in contexts of LM IIIA2 and LM IIIB date, leading scholars to conclude that the pots' presence was not the result of a unique episode. At

Cannatello, too, an oxhide ingot was found (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 153). In the FBA (1150–900 BC), Nuragic sherds turned up in several find spots on the Lipari acropolis, and Lo Schiavo (2006: 1328) suggests that they span a wider period than previously thought, pointing to multiple episodes of importation. There too, oxhide ingot fragments have been found, in the massive Lipari hoard that dates to the LBA or early FBA (Bernabò Brea and Cavalier 1980). Finally, at the end of the FBA and in the EIA, a particular class of Nuragic pot, the askoid jug, turns up at sites, particularly Phoenician ones, beyond the island (including Khaniale Tekke in Crete; Carthage; Carambolo in Iberia; Mozia on Sicily: Vagnetti 1989; Køllund 1998; Torres Ortiz 2004; Lo Schiavo 2005). These jugs have also been found in tombs at Vetulonia in west central Italy, though most may have been locally produced (Lo Schiavo 2003b: 154). Lo Schiavo suggests that the jugs may have had some religious function, as they are found in cult contexts on Sardinia and in tombs in Etruria, rather than forming part of domestic assemblages. Given the Iron Age date of these jugs, it would be ill-advised to group them with the earlier Sardinian finds, but they nevertheless illustrate yet another instance of Sardinian exports.

Overall, the quantities of Nuragic exports are small, and this is not a function of mere geography: the distribution of Sardinian obsidian in the Neolithic (Tykot 2004) shows consistent patterning in both source and destination, and points to an evolving and complex network involving, for example, targeted access to obsidian from particular sources at Monte Arci for groups living as far away as southern France. The two phenomena are difficult to compare given the vastly different time spans (3000 years of Neolithic obsidian exportation compared to 400–500 years for the LBA and FBA exports) and different circumstances. Nevertheless, we can gather that interactions with the mainland had occurred in earlier periods. While we may assume that some Nuragic exports go unnoticed because scholars working in other areas of the Mediterranean do not recognize them, if the quantities were significant enough, it seems unlikely that they would remain entirely overlooked. In the LBA and FBA

then, far from being outward-looking, Sardinia's residents for the most part must have purposefully refrained from establishing social relationships further afield, their attention focused inward as they invested old habits with new meanings.

These changes are embodied in the *nuraghi* themselves. The massive Nuragic complexes of the LBA exude an unambiguous sense of power and militarism. The wall separating them from the surrounding huts is clear evidence of the sharp distinction between those who occupied the *nuraghi* and the rest. These *nuraghi* must have been appropriated by the new elites as a sign of power over others and over a territory, thus detaching them from the majority of the *nuraghi*, whose social significance was quite different. This bifurcation of the buildings' significance, when it had formerly been axiomatic, marks a radical shift. The *nuraghe* had come to serve two purposes: the complex *nuraghi* were symbols of power, while the single tower *nuraghi* continued to underpin an island-wide cultural identity. These new appropriations came at a price: the tension between these two claims to the *nuraghi* appears to have led to anxiety over their authenticity.

'Authenticity,' a slippery quality to define thoroughly, becomes of great importance only when it appears to be vanishing. Cultural and social disruptions, resulting in problematized identities, will lead to competing claims to authenticity, of both objects and people. When it comes to objects, the distinction between authentic and fake may be easy to grasp, but how may an authentic object or place become inauthentic? What had formerly been authentic may cease to be when it no longer possesses 'original or inherent authority,' to draw from the Oxford English Dictionary definition of authentic. Once something is recognized as an object whose meaning is alterable, it can be said to have lost its authenticity. The *nuraghi* in the LBA and FBA came to be appropriated by new elites as a symbol of power, and from then on there were two competing claims to these towers. This cleavage in the meaning of the *nuraghi* is evident by the EIA when the proliferation of models of the towers, in

bronze and stone, speak to a new concern with recycling this image in varied ways (Blake 1997).

Conclusions

As we have seen, the notion of the LBA as a period of ‘extroversion’ on Sardinia may be overstated. But perhaps the earlier introversion of the EBA and MBA needs rethinking as well. The unusual megalithism is not unique to Sardinia: other islands in the central and western Mediterranean have similar buildings, most notably Corsica, Mallorca, Menorca, and Pantelleria (Camps 1990; Fernández-Miranda 1997; Tusa 1997). Each island’s buildings are different enough to show local inflections, but it seems very likely that their respective builders knew of the other’s constructions. In the case of Corsica and Sardinia, this is not surprising, as the two islands are separated by just 12 km of water, and their cultures had long been intertwined. However, that the residents of Menorca and the residents of Sardinia, some 385 km apart, were in contact requires more explaining. Likewise, Pantelleria is extremely isolated, and yet her *sesi* are not unlike a poorly built *nuraghe*. Thus, even the monument building need not speak to a period of isolation in any clear way. The island’s exposure to extrainsular contacts can thus be fit into a context of ongoing if sporadic interactions with other regions of the central and western Mediterranean, most visible in the insular monuments and the distribution of obsidian.

What the new waves of foreign contacts in the LBA and FBA allow us to do is see clearly the weaknesses of the Nuragic elites of that period. The fact that the inhabitants of the largest *nuraghi*, clearly with many people at their command, seem to have made no attempt to control the metals industry or the access to exotica may be a clue to the ultimate ‘balkanization’ of Nuragic society in the Iron Age and the abandonment of the *nuraghi* in favor of new dwellings. In the Bronze Age, Sardinia seemed to be on a trajectory toward a state-level polity, but the Iron Age saw no such coalescence into a supra-regional political unit.

While there is evidence of wealthy Iron Age elites, perhaps a veritable aristocracy, from such sites as Monte Prama with its magnificent statues, these elites are no longer centered at the *nuraghi*, and there are no signs of a coherent political framework of territorial control on a large scale (see Perra 2009 for a reinterpretation of Nuragic political structure over time, and see Tronchetti and van Dommelen 2005 for a study of Monte Prama and its Iron Age cultural context). The Phoenician colonists to the island cannot be blamed for this, as van Dommelen (1998: 107–109) makes clear, because the eighth century BC did not see any hardships inflicted on the Sardinians from outside. Instead, it was the case that the Nuragic political authorities of the LBA and FBA had not sufficiently harnessed the economic opportunities offered by the foreign contacts, focusing on a traditional resource base of land and livestock. While they were at pains to appropriate material symbols of status and power, in particular the *nuraghi* themselves, the abandonment of the *nuraghi* in the subsequent period suggests that they were not successful. In the first millennium BC, trade and metals were sources of power, and while a new class of Sardinian elites benefited from interactions with the Phoenician colonists, the ‘old guard’ presumably did not. Cultural uniformity was not protection enough against outside threats: political and economic centralization were necessary, and these were missing. The island’s peoples could never achieve an island-wide state-level polity on livestock alone, despite their foreign contacts. While there is an appeal to the acephalous cultural cohesion characterizing Sardinia in the second millennium BC, it could not withstand the pressures of the first power to try to control it, Carthage, and although elements of the Nuragic culture lingered for many centuries, it would never enjoy the same level of political, cultural, or economic autonomy again.

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to Bernard Knapp and Peter van Dommelen for their editorial support and patience, and to Robert Schon for his comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this

chapter. All errors are the sole responsibility of the author.

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Mobility, Migration and Colonisation

Movement of people and their material culture across the Mediterranean is one of the few factors that have consistently characterised the region from early prehistory until the present day. The shores of the Mediterranean Sea were settled early in the Palaeolithic, but most islands and in particular larger ones in more distant locations – e.g. Cyprus, Crete and Sardinia – or several, small isolated ones such as the Balearics and Pantelleria do not seem to have been inhabited permanently until the Mesolithic (Late Epipalaeolithic) or even the Bronze Age, as a slow process of migration from the mainland shores towards the islands gradually unfolded (Broodbank [2013](#): 126–28, 148–56). The absence of permanent settlement, of course, does not preclude earlier visits and short-term stays, as people moved back and forth across the seas to exchange raw materials and manufactured goods well before they established themselves on a more permanent basis. The islands of Pantelleria and Ibiza offer a good case in point, as they were not permanently settled until respectively the Bronze Age and the Phoenician period (Iron Age). Both islands nevertheless had been visited repeatedly or even intermittently occupied in earlier periods, as Pantellerian obsidian was exchanged across the southern central Mediterranean from the late Neolithic onwards, and several megalithic Bronze Age burials are known from Ibiza (Gómez Bellard [1995](#); Tykot [1996](#); Ardesia *et al.* [2006](#); Ramis [2010](#)).

While ‘mobility’ in the broadest sense of the term has thus

been a fact of life of Mediterranean people throughout (pre)history, these brief examples readily make it clear that more focused attention for the specific characteristics of these processes is necessary to grasp what was happening on the ground, as well as at sea. Bundling the notions of migration, colonisation and mobility to define the present set of chapters reflects our intention to probe these processes in more detail and to bring out their variability, as they capture different albeit partially overlapping sections of the broad spectrum of ‘mobility’ that may be discerned in Mediterranean prehistory and protohistory.

Of this triad, colonisation is the term with the longest tradition in Mediterranean archaeology, as it is the conventional label used to describe the establishment of overseas ‘colonial’ settlements in the Iron Age by Greeks and Phoenicians, as well as others such as Carthaginians and Romans later still. As these settlements were by and large new foundations that maintained their own distinctive identity in the new settings, often taking over and bringing cultural change to the ‘colonised regions’, they substantially intensified and transformed existing contacts and mobility patterns. Thus, it was the Iron Age that saw the emergence of intensive Mediterranean-wide networks, to the extent that we can state without exaggeration that colonisation became a hallmark of the Iron Age Mediterranean (Hodos [2006](#); Malkin [2011](#); van Dommelen [2012](#); Isayev [2013](#)).

Despite a century or more of colonisation studies in Classical archaeology, only in the last decade or two has the focus of scholarship shifted from generic studies of Greek and ‘Oriental’ influence and cultural impact, as perhaps best represented by ‘Orientalization’ studies (Riva and Vella [2006](#)), to the study of the actual presence and interaction of people of both colonial and indigenous descent in colonial situations. Migration is nevertheless only very gradually coming to the fore, as it represents a concept that has long received very little attention in archaeology overall. Although migration played a very prominent role in culture-historical approaches to archaeology, in which large-scale movements of people were used to explain cultural change,

the fierce critique of the New Archaeology meant that migration was no longer deemed a meaningful concept and accordingly was sidelined, a situation that more or less persists today (Anthony 1990; Knapp 2009; van Dommelen 2012).

Mobility is the overarching concept and, in our view, a necessary complement to the two foregoing notions, as it is not limited to movement of people but explicitly also includes movement of objects, otherwise typically referred to as 'exchange'. Informed by recent material culture studies and notions such as the 'social biography' of objects, 'object diasporas' and 'things-in-motion' (Knapp and van Dommelen 2010), mobility has begun to be used as a conceptual tool to explore the cultural and material connections that were forged between distant regions, often separated by sea. This enables us not just to track the distribution of objects but also to investigate the role and significance of exchanged objects in multiple contexts and to arrive at a much fuller understanding of what mobility entailed and brought about across the Mediterranean.

While transport and voyaging could be considered under this heading as well, the emphasis in this section is not so much on the mechanics of mobility as on understanding the ways in which the actual displacement of objects and indeed of people themselves resonated with people's self-perception and their views of their place in the world – in short, how 'material connections' contributed to the 'creation of difference' (Rowlands 2010: 235). As Greenblatt (2010: 250) recently argued, 'mobility must be taken in a highly literal sense', because '[o]nly when conditions directly related to literal movement are firmly grasped will it be possible fully to understand the metaphorical movements'.

This point is abundantly and convincingly brought home by the chapters in this section. They remind us first of all that the Mediterranean Bronze and Iron Ages cover the entire range of mobility of people and objects, from long-term and long-distance connections in not always straightforward ways (Levant, Anatolia, Iberia) to migration and colonisation not just to islands (Cyprus) but also on

mainlands (south Italy).

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7 Corridors and Colonies: Comparing Fourth–Third Millennium BC Interactions in Southeast Anatolia and the Levant

Raphael Greenberg and Giulio Palumbi

Abstract

This study addresses what appear to be similar modes of external interaction experienced by societies of the Anatolian Euphrates valley and the northwestern Levant on the one hand, and on the other the southern Levant during the fourth and third millennium BC. During the fourth millennium BC, both regions were the target of expansion by neighboring literate cultures, Uruk in the north and Egypt in the south. Both regions were significantly affected by the withdrawal of colonizers associated with these expansions, and both saw the arrival of a vastly different third-millennium BC spread of people and ideas derived from the Kura-Araks cultures of eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus. In our discussion, we introduce cultural and sociopolitical developments in each region, and then compare them. To what extent are the Uruk and Egyptian ventures colonial in intent and in impact? What occurs in their aftermath? What brought ‘Kura-Araks people’ southward, and what cultural markers did they preserve in the farthest reaches of their expansion? What links together the various regions that they inhabited? This cross-regional consideration summarizes the present state of inquiry and initiates a dialogue on the significance of long-range interaction at the periphery of the core civilizations at the dawn of the Bronze Age.

Introduction

This chapter concerns the interactions of several east Mediterranean regions with their southern and northern neighbors during the formative period of literate civilization in the Near East, between the mid-fourth and mid-third millennia BC. These regions – the Anatolian Euphrates valley, the northwest Levant, and the southern Levant – reside at the edges of the core regions of political and cultural innovation during this period of time. During the late fourth millennium BC, all of them came into early contact with one of the core cultures, Mesopotamia or Egypt, and all were affected, during the early third millennium BC, by the spread of the Kura-Araks cultural tradition, generally thought to have originated in the southern Caucasus and eastern Anatolia during the second half of the fourth millennium BC. Traditionally separated by divergent scholarly specializations, the consideration of these regions side-by-side offers an opportunity to examine the impact of contemporaneous cores on their peripheries, as well as the significance of the barrier-transgressing Kura-Araks phenomenon in the farthest reaches of its expansion.

Consideration of these issues proceeds in two stages. In the first, we respond to questions relating to the primary instance of contact between local cultures – those of the Anatolian Euphrates and the northwest Levant on the one hand, and the southern Levant on the other – and the neighboring expanding civilizations, Uruk and Egypt. The questions address the nature of local society at contact, the understanding of that contact, and the impact of contact on local social development and change. We then compare and contrast the two perspectives.

The second part of the discussion is devoted to the Kura-Araks phenomenon: the sudden appearance of large cultural assemblages clearly derived from the traditions of a widely spread, segmented village society originating in the vicinity of the Kura and Araks river valleys. The questions we address in this section, for each region, include the chronology and extent of the Kura-Araks ‘intrusion’ in each

area, the preferred means of material expression of this cultural (and social) phenomenon, the relation between the Kura-Araks and local material cultures and its implications for the nature of interaction between newcomers and indigenes, and the demise of the phenomenon.

In many senses, the issues addressed here impinge on central concerns of Mediterranean archaeology, such as sociocultural identities, interaction, transformation, and, most pointedly, the nature of colonial contact and of postcolonial restructuration. In studying these phenomena in late prehistory, we are dependent for our interpretations on the constitutive functions of material culture. Houses, artifacts, daily routines, and rituals are the medium for producing and reproducing the social world. They, and the technologies by which they are created, form clusters of implicate relations (cultural ‘packages’) that were embodied through practice. This does not necessarily mean that material culture is coextensive with ethnicity or political boundaries; it does, however, require that the translocation of significant clusters of technologies, artifact types, household organization, or mortuary customs be associated with a recognizable form of social agency: migration, emulation, reinterpretation, or the like.

Because of the divergent archaeologies of these two regions, there are significant terminological differences between them. [Table 7.1](#) correlates the terminological designations in relation to the conventional absolute chronology based on radiocarbon determinations and some historical synchronisms.

Table 7.1. Comparative Chronological Chart.

Anatolian Euphrates Valley	Northwestern Levant	Southern Levant	Years Cal BC
Late Ubaid	‘Amuq E	Late	4500
Late Chalcolithic		Chalcolithic	
1			

Late Chalcolithic 2–4	‘Amuq F	Early Bronze 3500 IA
Late Chalcolithic 5	‘Amuq Early G	Early Bronze IB
		3000
Early Bronze I	Late G–Early H	Early Bronze II
		2500
Early Bronze II	Middle–Late H	Early Bronze III
Early Bronze III	‘Amuq I	Early Bronze IV/ Intermediate Bronze
2000 ‘Amuq J (Early Bronze IV)		

Part I. Between Uruk and Egypt: Contact between Formative Civilizations and Their Margins in the Late Fourth Millennium BC

The Euphrates Valley, the Northern Levant, and Uruk Mesopotamia

The Nature of Local Society at the Time of Contact

During the first half of the fourth millennium BC, in Phases 3 and 4 of the Late Chalcolithic (Rothman 2001), the Late Ubaid village-based societies of the Euphrates valley and the northern Levant shared a set of important transformations that led to the emergence of more complex forms of social

and productive organization. The Late Chalcolithic chaff-faced pottery, characterized by increased technological and morphological standardization (particularly noticeable in the case of mass-produced bowls), is symptomatic of these changes. It may be seen as evidence for the emergence of local workshops, contextualized in a wide-ranging process of craft specialization (Palmieri 1985: 193–98; Trufelli 1994).

These changes took place in regional centers that grew substantially in size. Large-scale or monumental public architecture, such as the imposing terraced building at Hacinebi (Stein 2001: 271–72), suggest the emergence of political institutions that were able not only to coordinate collective labor, but also, as in the case of the Arslantepe phase VII tripartite temple (where clay sealings and large amounts of mass-produced bowls have been found), to control access to foodstuffs and primary resources by means of ritualized redistributive activities (Frangipane 2001a: 327–29). In connection with this phenomenon, the stable emergence of local elites can also be inferred from the construction of large and prominent residential units in the settlements (Frangipane 1993) and of richly furnished elite tombs (e.g., at Korucutepe and Hacinebi: Palmieri 1985: 196; Stein 2001: 273–74).

Late Chalcolithic society underwent further development once the communities of northwest Syria and the Euphrates valley started to interact with a new, expanding entity originating outside these regions. This is the so-called Uruk phenomenon (Figure 7.1), recorded from the second half of the fourth millennium BC (Late Chalcolithic 5) and generally considered a product of the economic, cultural, and political expansion of early urban entities in the Mesopotamian alluvium. The evidence for contact consists of a wide range of southern Mesopotamian elements, such as new ceramic repertoires and technologies, house and temple plans, iconographic styles and narratives, and new forms of bureaucratic control and accountancy (cylinder seals and the ‘invention’ of writing).

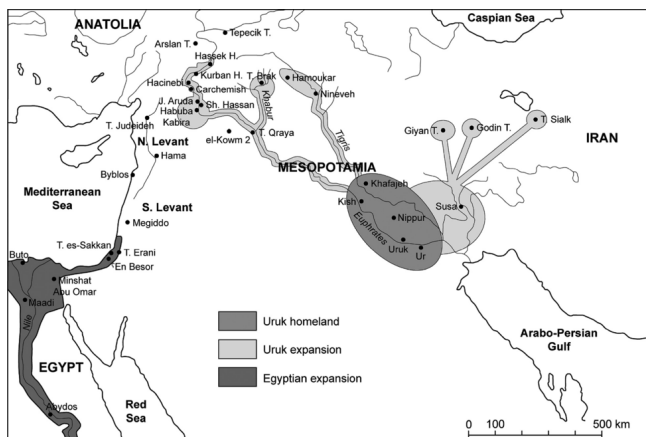


Figure 7.1. Map of Uruk and Egyptian expansions (courtesy of P. de Miroschedji).

The dynamics of the spread of these elements from the Mesopotamian ‘core’ to the surrounding ‘periphery’ appears to be associated with the physical translocation of communities of southern origin. This intrusive Mesopotamian presence in Syria and in the Anatolian Euphrates valley took on different forms: from the foundation of new colonial settlements (such as Habuba Kabira and Jebel Aruda in the Syrian Euphrates valley), to the implantation of outposts (e.g., Hassek Höyük and Hacinebi in the Lower Anatolian Euphrates) both in isolation and in coexistence with the indigenous communities, and finally to the adoption of Uruk traits in communities that never experienced an alien Mesopotamian presence (e.g., Arslantepe in the Upper Euphrates region: Frangipane 1996: 212–53).

Explanations for Uruk Contact

Several explanations for the Uruk expansion have been put forward in an attempt to account for the multifaceted aspects of the southern Mesopotamian impact on the surrounding regions (Butterlin 2003). Trade and a commercial logic were among the first hypotheses advanced. According to Algaze (1989; 1993: 75–84), the need for precious raw materials (copper, silver, timber, and

semiprecious stones) not available in the Mesopotamian alluvium prompted the founding of colonies and outposts. Another feature of Algaze's reading (partly reconsidered in recent works, e.g., Algaze 2001) is that economic exploitation would have implied asymmetrical forms of political interaction between the centers of the Mesopotamian core at the expense of the peripheral communities. While long-distance exchange relations were certainly one of the most characteristic traits of this expansion, Algaze's perspective on the asymmetrical and 'imperialistic' nature of these relationships has been criticized on two main counts.

The first is the re-evaluation of the sociopolitical developments of the Late Chalcolithic communities, emphasizing that at the time of the Uruk expansion a large part of the northern periphery had already witnessed the establishment of complex societies characterized by specialized craft production, the emergence of local elites, control over labor, and long-distance contacts (Frangipane 2001a; Schwartz 2001; Stein 2001). According to these authors, the local Late Chalcolithic communities were already organized enough to interact at a peer-polity level with the southern Mesopotamian centers. The second criticism is that trade was not the main and sole focus of Uruk expansion. In fact, clear evidence of systematic exploitation of raw-material resources located in faraway regions is scant (Schwartz 2001; Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: 202–206). According to this negative evidence, it has been suggested that the movement of the southern Mesopotamian communities to the north could be explained by other factors, grounded in the dynamics and social contradictions inherent in urbanization (e.g., lack of land, escape from oppressive economic regimes of the south: Butterlin 2003: 97–158).

The Impact of Uruk on Local Society

In spite of these criticisms, it is clear that Late Uruk contact with the Anatolian Euphrates valley was not without its

profound and long-lasting consequences. From the political and economic point of view, the Uruk expansion seems to have accelerated the formation of centralized early-state institutions capable of controlling redistributive activities and of an expanding apparatus of functionaries, economic transactions, and specialized labor.

From the cultural point of view, the Late Uruk system, encouraging mutual interaction between different regions, greatly contributed to an extensive process of cultural homogenization of northern Syria, the northern Levant, and the Upper Euphrates region. This was definitely the result of relations with the alluvium, but also of a more profound action undertaken at the level of the political ideologies of the peripheral power institutions (Collins 2000). On the margins of the Late Uruk system, however, the southern Mesopotamian impact seems to have acted on a more selective level (in the spheres of economic and political control) because distance and possibly a shorter temporal scope of interaction did not permit the southern models to be assimilated completely.

The significant difference between Late Uruk impact in the Upper Euphrates region and in more southerly regions is clearly illustrated at Arslantepe in the Malatya plain, where phase VIA saw the construction of a monumental public building that hosted political, economic, and cultic activities (Frangipane and Palmieri 1983a: 297–325; Frangipane 1997). Here, a local power group was controlling, by means of redistributive activities administered by a complex bureaucratic system (evidenced by thousands of clay sealings), economic transactions, primary production, and specialized craft activities (Frangipane 2007). Many features of the material culture from Arslantepe VIA, especially those related to specialized and artistic production (wheelmade pottery, glyptic, and wall paintings), reproduced styles and models adopted from the Uruk world.

Where this process differed from Syria and the lower parts of the Euphrates valley was that the participation of the Upper Euphrates region in the Uruk network probably activated another system of interactions with the central and

eastern regions of Anatolia. The increasing presence of Red-Black Burnished Ware (RBBW) throughout the entire Upper Euphrates, a ceramic tradition formerly extraneous to the region and characterized by the typical contrasting chromatic patterns between the internal and the external surfaces of the same container, is a sign that new cultural frontiers had opened up at this time (Frangipane and Palumbi 2007). Even if the debate over the origins of this ceramic tradition is still open, the data from central and northeastern Anatolia show that RBBW was in fact a widely shared tradition in these regions as early as the middle of the fourth millennium BC (Palumbi 2003; Palumbi 2008: 100–104).

Among the consequences of these multiple northern and southern interactions was the formation of a mixed ceramic background clearly expressed in the coexistence of heterogeneous pottery traditions with different geographical and cultural origins and resulting from different *chaînes opératoires*. At Arslantepe, wheelmade, mass-produced Late Uruk pottery and handmade carefully burnished red-black ware were integrated in the same spatial, functional, and symbolic contexts (Frangipane and Palmieri 1983a: 354–61). The amount of RBBW (10–11%) (Frangipane and Palmieri 1983a: 354; Palumbi 2008: 79–93) suggests that this was a local production distinguishable by a fixed morphological repertoire (large bowls, cups, globular jars, jugs, and fruitstands). This repertoire of shapes, coupled with the fact that at this stage RBBW from the Upper Euphrates was characterized by the red-black alternate pattern (black on the internal surface of the open shapes and on the external surface of the closed vessels), shows strong similarities with the central Anatolian RBBW tradition (Todd 1973), and differs from northeast Anatolia where RBBW followed a fixed pattern (black always on the outside); this tradition would characterize red-black Kura-Araks ceramics for centuries.

The exploitation of and trade in metal ores (with which the regions of central and eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus were richly endowed), conveyed through the

Upper Euphrates toward Syria and Mesopotamia, may have provided a strategic reason for the consolidation of these Anatolian relations. In fact, there are a number of significant matches between the composition of the arsenical-copper spearheads from Arslantepe phase VIA and the copper deposits in the central Anatolian and Pontic regions (Hauptmann *et al.* 2002).

In the second half of the fourth millennium BC, the synchronic involvement of the Upper Euphrates in two radically different systems of interaction (one southern and one northern) may have triggered different but mutually related processes. On the one hand, the elitist acquisition of Mesopotamian cultural models and the formation of centralized early state polities may possibly have entailed a temporary transformation of the local social structure with the establishment of a vertical (two-tiered) hierarchy of dominants and dominated (Frangipane 2001a: 338–39). On the other hand, the construction of stable relationships with the neighboring central and eastern Anatolian regions may have initiated the progressive involvement of eastern and central Anatolian networks in the dynamics of the Euphrates valley.

The destruction of the Arslantepe public building around 3100 BC (in evident connection with the collapse of the Uruk system) underlines how local elites were in fact strongly linked to the Uruk expansion, thus indicating how the developments of a local early-state centralized institution could not work without a larger infrastructure of southern-oriented relationships. This collapse enabled the northern network of interactions (and more specifically the one connected to eastern Anatolia and to the Kura-Araks communities) to play a determining role in subsequent developments within the Upper Euphrates, and in a more diluted and possibly diluted way, in those of the Lower Anatolian Euphrates valley and the ‘Amuq region.

The Southern Levant and Egypt

The Nature of Levantine Society at the Time of Egyptian Contact

Early Bronze (EB) IA settlement in the southern Levant (ca. 3600–3300 BC) may be characterized as extensive rather than intensive in its use of land. Social formations were small and segmented; craft specialization and long-distance contacts were limited. Discarding the ideological superstructure of the Ghassulian Chalcolithic, its long-distance trade contacts (particularly its access to arsenical copper from the north), and the prestige-oriented and highly specialized elite material culture that went along with them, Early Bronze people in the Levant focused on the fundamental building blocks of sedentary and semi-sedentary life: cereal-based agriculture, vine and olive horticulture, and herding. These were labor-intensive tasks at a time when labor in the widely dispersed villages may well have been scarce: the ability to command labor was to become a standard of power during the Early Bronze Age.

Limited evidence for mutual contact between Egypt and the southern Levant can be attributed to EB IA (equivalent to Naqada IIC–D: Levy and van den Brink 2002: 20). Wengrow (2006: 39) has attributed the large-scale integration of cereals into the Egyptian diet to the adoption of southwest Asian agricultural technologies, through contact with the east Mediterranean littoral and the southern Levant during late Naqada II. But the impact of Egypt in the southern Levant was to be felt only at a later point, in the Naqada III period, equivalent to the EB IB.

During EB IB (ca. 3300–3000 BCE), village society began to coalesce into larger and more permanent settlements. Large cemeteries appeared, characterized by multiple-burial tomb-caves. Two important sub-phases have been discerned in the EB IB, each associated with a different mode of interaction with Egypt. The earlier phase has been clearly characterized in the southern part of the south Levantine expanse as the ‘Erani C’ phase (Yekutieli 2006). According to Yekutieli, the architecture associated with ‘Phase C’ at Tel ‘Erani (a large mound in the southern coastal plain) included

substantial pillared mud-brick buildings built in dense *insulae* separated by streets. Contemporaneous sites have yielded substantial stone buildings and a possible cultic structure (Mazar and de Miroschedji 1996).

The nature of EB I settlement does not change drastically as the period wears on. There was a marked increase in the density of settlement, and many villages grew to a substantial size. Houses often appear to form extended family compounds, and occasionally evidence turns up for the accumulation of wealth. The pillared building in Erani has been mentioned; a similar, recently published late EB I compound at Beth Shean reveals large-scale grain storage and processing facilities (Mazar and Rotem 2009). There are several instances of large-scale monumental construction in the villages; these would have been the product of a collective effort, presumably organized by elders or ‘big men.’ The most striking of these is the succession of three cult structures at Megiddo, the largest of which achieved a truly monumental scale (Adams *et al.* 2014), and was accompanied by clear evidence for ritual feasting (Wapnish and Hesse 2002). But such monuments, which would have served an integrating function within the largest villages, are still to be considered as the exception rather than the rule. In one case at least, that of Megiddo, the influence of foreign contact (see below) needs to be considered as a possible factor in the sheer scale of public architecture. Moreover, the mortuary evidence is entirely in line with the perseverance of a collective ethos (Baxevani 1995; Ilan 2002); status differentiation at death is virtually unknown.

The EB IB society with which Naqada II–III Egypt interacted was thus a vibrant and heterogeneous village society with few regional centers and incipient, undeveloped forms of hierarchy, staple finance, and status differentiation. In terms of agricultural technology, it had perfected the ‘Mediterranean package’: plowing and cereal agriculture, vine and olive horticulture, and a wide exploitation of secondary animal products. Local mineral resources utilized in this period included copper from the ‘Arabah region and bitumen from the Dead Sea.

Understanding the Egyptian Presence

The interpretation of predynastic Egyptian contact with the Levant has taken a fascinating route from the textual to the archaeological. Its starting point is marked by Yadin's (1955) interpretation of the Narmer palette as a narrative of Egyptian conquest in Asia. Without doubt, this colored the interpretations of finds, subsequently made in Israel, of Egyptian artifacts – particularly of sherds bearing the incised name of Narmer – in EB I contexts; they were assumed to represent a record of incursions from a nascent Egyptian state into the Canaanite periphery. It was only after the discovery of a series of sites that yielded evidence for the long-term presence of Egyptians carrying out mundane tasks of subsistence and food-preparation, alongside some administrative activity, that the literal reading of the palette was replaced by archaeological constructs. In a parallel development, the narrative explication of the Narmer palette evolved into an interpretation of it as a symbolic-ideological composition (Köhler 2002; Wengrow 2006: 207), while renewed research in predynastic cemeteries and sites refined the chronology of Levantine impact (Hendrickx and Bavay 2002). In this manner, archaeology served as a corrective to assumptions based on preconceived ideas of 'civilization' and 'periphery.'

Two principle phases can now be distinguished. In the first, the bulk of evidence for Levantine–Egyptian interaction comes from Egypt itself and from a scatter of short-lived sites established along the north Sinai littoral. For the most part, it consists of large quantities of 'Erani C' or contemporary pottery found in elite tombs throughout the Nile Valley (Hendrickx and Bavay 2002), including the extraordinary collection of imported pots and their imitations discovered in the predynastic royal tomb Uj in Abydos (Hartung 2002). In the Levant itself, however, evidence for contact is slight. Wengrow (2006: 135–50) and Yekutieli (2006), among others, have suggested that Egypt sought to acquire advanced agricultural technologies in the southern Levantine coastal plains. If this was indeed the case, a rapidly evolving but agriculturally challenged

Egyptian ‘core’ was exploiting a technologically secure but politically undeveloped ‘periphery,’ to the great advantage of the former but to no obvious detriment of the latter. This situation, however, was about to change.

In the second phase, the theater of interaction moved decisively to the southwestern Levantine coast, where excavations undertaken since the late 1970s have uncovered the components of what is often termed an Egyptian colony (Brandl 1992; Porat 1992). The presumed colony (Figures 7.1 and 7.2) consists of a core area apparently centered around a fortified town at Tell es-Sakkan near Gaza, a number of small sites with a heavily Egyptianized material culture assemblage, and outlying sites that show clear Egyptian traits in coexistence with the local southern Levantine culture (de Miroschedji *et al.* 2001; Yekutieli 2008). The evidence for the actual presence of Egyptians consists of large quantities of locally made quotidian artifacts of obvious Egyptian derivation: bread-molds, beer basins, lotus bowls, flint artifacts, and more (see, e.g., Gophna 1995). In the core area, these finds – along with actual imports from Egypt – comprise the bulk of the recovered assemblages, whereas other sites show a clear admixture of Egyptian and local elements, including purported ‘hybrid’ pottery (i.e., ceramics revealing a mixture of Egyptian technique and local form, or vice versa). At the latter sites, evidence has been presented for cultural segregation, indicating that Egyptians and local people occupied different parts of the site and probably held different statuses. In addition to finds of a domestic nature, there was clear evidence for Egyptian administrative activity (mainly stamped mud sealings) both in the core areas and at their edges, as well as for importation of Egyptian products, some bearing royal insignia, principally of King Narmer (van den Brink and Braun 2002).

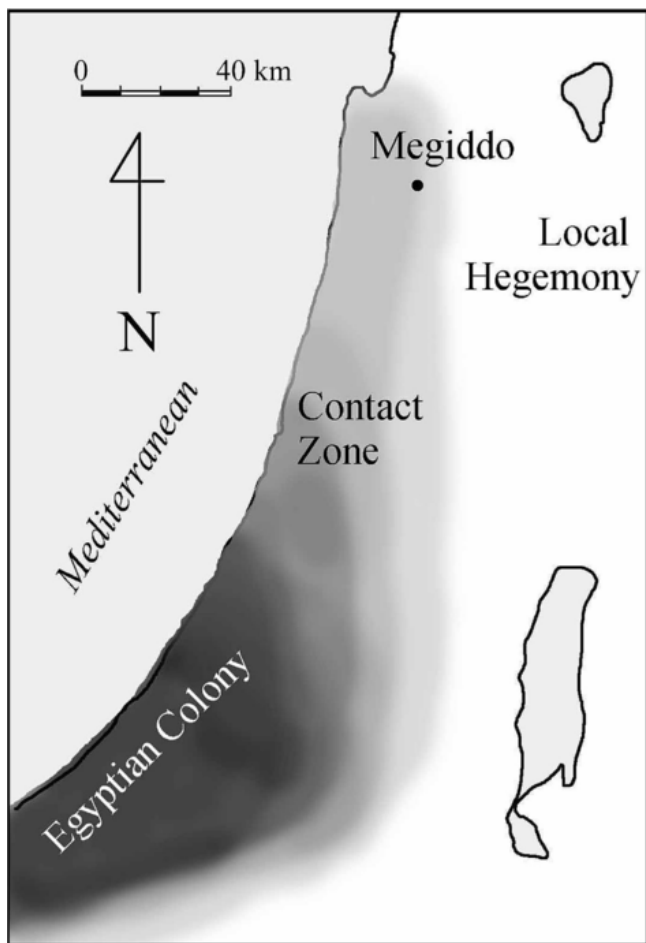


Figure 7.2. The Egyptian colony in the southwest Levant and its environs (courtesy of Y. Yekutieli).

Beyond the core zone and its immediate periphery lay the ‘contact zone’ (Yekutieli [2008](#)), an area east and north of the core where Egyptian presence is visible, but at a far lower intensity. In this contact zone, interaction with the Egyptians seems to have been confined to gift exchange and occasional forays from the core. A case in point is Megiddo. According to the results presented by the Tel Aviv University expedition at the site, a series of three temples was built in quick succession during EB IB, the last being a structure of astounding size, 30×50 m, including a pillared hall

(internal dimensions 9×30 m) furnished with eight pillar bases and eight basalt offering-tables (Adams 2013; Adams *et al.* 2014). The earlier temples were approached by a paved causeway, part of which was given over to a carefully arranged collection of incised floor-slabs (the causeway might have still been used in the later phase). Recent considerations of this 'picture pavement' have established with reasonable certainty that the main recurrent theme is one of charismatic leadership, expressed in a vernacular style that draws inspiration from Egyptian models (Keinan 2007; Yekutieli 2008). Egyptian finds associated with all three temples are comprised mainly of prestige items, such as a large ceremonial spearhead or stone and faience amulets. We might therefore conclude that local leaders were using the Egyptian connection as leverage in their bid for legitimacy, whereas the Egyptians employed them as agents for the procuring of certain goods from the northern reaches of the southern Levant.

What, in fact, was being sent down south? The rarity of Levantine pottery in Egypt indicates that olive oil and wine were no longer the main imports. Resins could have been transported in small containers, and some wood may have been sent via the coast. The preoccupation of the colonial outposts with beer and bread production suggests that mouths were being fed – perhaps laborers bound for Egypt. This could be part of the explanation for the ultimate rejection by the locals of all things Egyptian, following the post-Narmer withdrawal.

In sum, a long trajectory of Egyptian involvement can be traced in the EB I southern Levant, culminating in the establishment of Egyptian occupation along the southern coast. In each stage, the impact of contact can be observed on both the Egyptian and Levantine sides. The Egyptian settlements in the Levant are not uniform; each seems to specialize in an aspect of administration: Tell es-Sakkan (de Miroschedji *et al.* 2001) as a political center, 'En Besor (Gophna 1995) as an administrative outpost or way-station, Halif terrace (Levy *et al.* 1997) as a point of contact with local populations, and so on. The 'colonial' interpretation is

not, therefore, a product of etiological thinking, but a valid assessment based on evidence for physical presence, administration, raw material and technological exploitation, and ideology. By all accounts, the end of massive Egyptian involvement at the cusp of EB II was sudden and complete, also attesting to an act of political will.

The Impact of the Egyptian Presence on Local Society

There are some grounds to suggest that important factions in local society resented the Egyptian presence. The absence of cemeteries in the Egyptian core zone is striking, intimating not only that Egyptians abhorred the notion of burial abroad, but that local people were dispossessed and had to use burial grounds situated outside the zone. It also suggests that, individually, Egyptians saw themselves as temporary residents on a mission, rather than as a truly dislocated diaspora. Yekutieli (2008) has noted the colonizers' need to fortify Tell es-Sakkan, and has identified other expressions of resistance. If part of the activity of Egyptians in the Levant was the exploitation of human labor, this could have been a significant factor in the negative perception of their presence.

There can be little doubt that interaction with Egyptians motivated self-organization in the Levantine villages. It is equally clear, however, that despite prolonged and direct exposure of southern Levantine society to Egyptian social and political practice, the values of the Egyptian 'core' found little purchase in the Early Bronze Age Levant (cf. Joffe 1993: 58). Egyptian presence contributed little or nothing to the specific materialization of EB II urbanism in the southern Levant.

The withdrawal of Egypt from southwest Canaan surely had serious repercussions in those regions that interacted with the Egyptian colony. Megiddo, whose status may have been maintained by virtue of its Egyptian connections, appears to have fissioned at the end of EB I. In areas nearer to the colony, many villages were abandoned. The

establishment of the EB II system involved a redistribution of authority and significant political realignment (Greenberg 2003). In the millennia prior to the Egyptian expansion, the near and more distant north had been a source of cultural stimulus for inhabitants of the southern Levant, as was certainly the case in the later part of the Bronze Age. In fact, the north was a source of inspiration for early Egypt itself, and contact with the north could have been, to some extent, a motivation for Egyptian ventures into Asia. The impetus for the limited urbanization of the southern Levant, albeit indirect and enacted through a series of creative reinterpretations, should also be sought in the north or northeast extension of Mesopotamian ('Urukian') urbanism (Greenberg 2011).

Discussion: The Uruk and Egyptian 'Colonizations' in Mutual Perspective

Our brief presentation of two putative colonial encounters at the northern and southern extremities of the east Mediterranean littoral reveals two quite different phenomena. In terms of sheer geographical extent, the Uruk expansion outstrips the Egyptian one. But this comes at a cost: the impact of Uruk becomes increasingly diffuse and more difficult to define at the edges of its expansion. The motivations and mechanisms of the two phenomena are likely to have been quite different: in the case of Mesopotamia, the Uruk phenomenon is strongly connected to processes of progressive urbanization, in the course of which new outposts that incorporated central elements of Uruk urban culture served both as bases for further expansion as well as crucibles of independent development. At its northern periphery, the involvement of the local elites was likely a crucial component in the Uruk expansion, leading to more 'collaborative' participation and affiliation with the economic and ideological logic of the long-distance contacts and exchanges. In Egypt, the central process was the emergence of royal power and economic centralization. Consequently, the Egyptian colonization of its nearest Asian neighbor was less constitutive in nature – imposing its

priorities on the Levantine countryside and wielding its leverage at pivotal locations outside its immediate control (e.g., Megiddo) rather than adapting to its new surroundings and attempting to engage local institutions on middle ground.

In spite of these differences, our comparison does reveal some similarities that may be ascribed to a strong interest evinced by the two growing civilizations in the expansion of their horizons. In both cases the opening of local 'peripheral' societies to the 'colonizing' world takes on its own dynamic, allowing them to look north as well as south. Also, in both cases, the departure of the intrusive element leads to a significant restructuring. In the north, the collapse of the former centralized institutions and a consequent void of power was followed by the reorganization of the local communities along more traditional village or clan-based political and economic lines (as a consequence of the rejection of the Mesopotamian early-state urbanized model). In the south, we witness the crystallization of early walled, town-like polities of limited scale in the areas of former contact that surrounded the Egyptian colony.

This, then, may be the most significant outcome of the comparison: in both cases of contact between expanding entities and their periphery, the latter exhibits an active engagement or reaction. It is changed in ways that are not always clearly evident (especially regarding daily life and the nonelite spheres) but are nonetheless fundamental, such that the withdrawal of the expanding entity entailed crisis and realignment. Neither region returned to its former trajectory, and in both the return to a colonized status remained as a latent possibility, occasionally realized over the coming millennia. They were, in the most primary sense, postcolonial. And it is this status that no doubt contributed to the manner in which further foreign contacts were perceived and received, as we shall see below.

Part II: The Kura-Araks Phenomenon

and Its Derivatives

In all areas of its dispersal ([Figure 7.3](#)), the Kura-Araks cultural package crosscuts the modes and vectors of cultural interaction that characterize the ‘core-periphery’ formats of the late fourth millennium BC, as well as those of the second millennium BC. It is perhaps this ‘outsider’ role that has attracted so much attention to the phenomenon, especially on the part of those who have tried to map the large-scale ebbs and flows of Eurasian cultural (and ethnic?) transmission (for overviews, see Sagona [1984](#); Kohl [2007](#)).

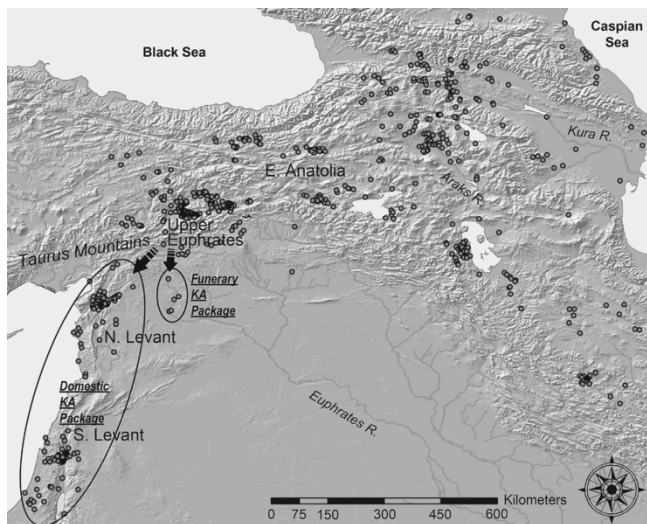


Figure 7.3. Map of Kura-Araks and related settlement (base map courtesy of S. Batiuk).

It has been suggested recently that the Kura-Araks cultural package ([Figure 7.4](#)) originated in multiple interactions and synergies among mid-fourth millennium BC communities of the Anatolian, Iranian, and Caucasian highlands (Kohl [2007](#): 88–89, 96; Palumbi [2008](#); Sagona and Zimansky [2009](#): 166, 168). Pottery traditions show a very specific set of traits: the red-black contrast based on oxidation and reduction during firing, high burnish, the constant use of handles on both open and closed shapes, a core morphological repertoire, and a stable iconography of surface decorations.

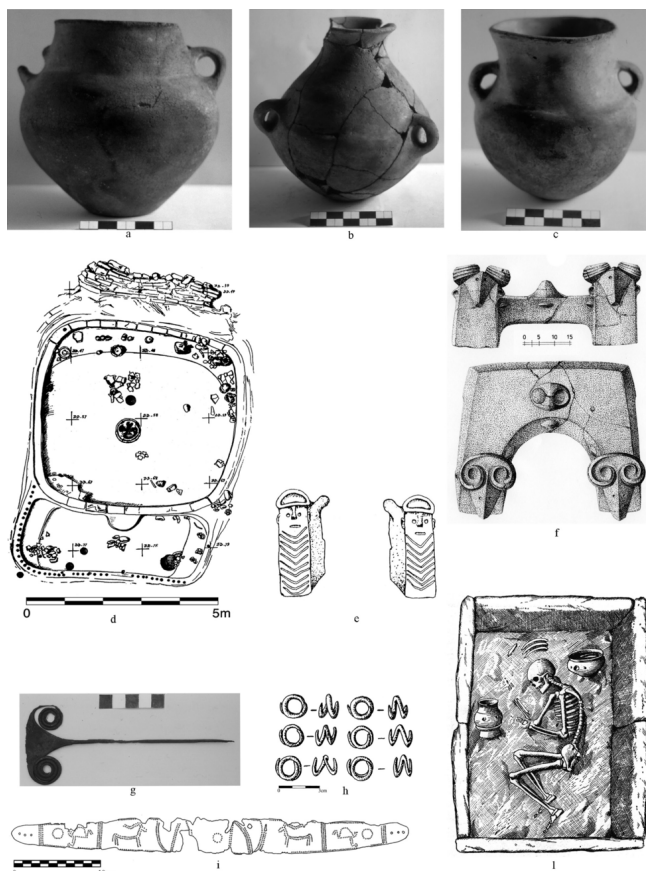


Figure 7.4. Markers of the Kura-Araks cultural ‘package’ (ceramics, wattle and daub architecture, stone cists, metallurgy, and andirons) (*a,b,c,g,i* from Palumbi 2008; *d* from Džavakhishvili and Glonti 1962; *e* from Takaoğlu 2000; *f* from Badalyan 1985; *h* from Khoridze and Palumbi 2008; *l* from Khanzadian 1979).

Small wooden or wattle and daub houses are another hallmark of this culture, although other materials (stones and mud-brick) were employed. They generally contain fixed hearths or portable andirons, often embellished with anthropomorphic or zoomorphic decorations. Whether connected to ancestral or totemic cults, the spatial and symbolic centrality of these installations stresses how ritual and domestic activities may have been strongly entwined in

the daily practices performed in and around the Kura-Araks dwellings (Kushnareva 1997: 76; Sagona 1998: 22; Takaoğlu 2000; Smogorzewska 2004).

Kura-Araks burial practices show a rather wide range of funerary structures, types of inhumations, and body treatments (Sagona 2004; Palumbi 2008). Horseshoe-shaped tombs, and more frequently stone-lined cists, represent the most distinguishing mortuary structures, hosting both single and collective burials. Metallurgical know-how is also often associated with the Kura-Araks culture, yet large concentrations of metal artifacts are in fact rare, and their use and production is rather dispersed. Metal artifacts – all of arsenical copper – include body ornaments (hair spirals, spiral bracelets, double spiral-headed pins, different shapes of beads) and, more rarely, tools and weapons.

While these elements rarely all appear together outside the ‘homelands’ of the southern Caucasus and eastern Anatolia, enough are preserved to permit this culture to be recognized at the most distant extremities of its dispersal.

The Anatolian Euphrates Valley and the Northern Levant

Chronology and Extent

In the Upper Euphrates region, it is possible to distinguish two distinct moments of the Kura-Araks intrusion. The first can be dated to the beginning of the third millennium BC (in EB I) and seems to be a direct consequence of the collapse of the power structures after the Late Uruk expansion.

The final destruction of the Arslantepe VIA public building around 3100 BC is followed by phase VIB1 (3100–2900 BC), which records temporary occupations by groups of mobile pastoralists (ovicaprine comprise more than 70% of the reared species) (Bartosiewicz 1998) with a strong Kura-Araks cultural orientation. Wattle and daub architecture represents a sharp break in the occupational sequence both in terms of building traditions (in opposition to the mud-

brick architecture) and in the way the settlement was used (Frangipane and Palmieri 1983b: 523–29). Strong cultural breaks are attested in pottery traditions, where red-black burnished ceramics reproduce typical Kura-Araks repertoires (handled jars, lids, and large S-shaped bowls: Frangipane and Palmieri 1983b: 536–42; Palumbi 2008: 223–35).

Clear Kura-Araks-like traits are also recorded in the Arslantepe ‘Royal Tomb,’ built at the end of phase VIB1. This elite funerary structure (dated to 3081–2897 Cal BC) (Frangipane *et al.* 2001) indicates that after the Uruk collapse, new elites were reorientating themselves toward Caucasian political and cultural referents (Frangipane 2001b; Rothman 2003; Palumbi 2008: 148–55). The strong Caucasian influence is visible in many aspects of the funerary ritual: the stone-lined cist and a large part of the grave goods (diadems, hair spirals, chisels, axes, gauges, and knives). These were mixed with other elements recalling the Uruk-derived traditions (metal spearheads and wheelmade pottery).

The mixture of local and Kura-Araks traits recorded both in phase VIB1 and in the Royal Tomb does not enable us to say whether we are dealing with migrants – perhaps transhumant pastoralists from eastern Anatolia or the southern Caucasus camping at Arslantepe – or with a process of reorientation by part of the indigenous population toward the Kura-Araks world. While significant new elements indicate the arrival of alien groups, other elements of their material culture, such as circular fireplaces, certain pottery forms, and the exclusive production of RBBW with alternate pattern (the same as in the fourth millennium BC), may suggest that indigenous communities were mingling local and Kura-Araks traditions (Frangipane *et al.* 2005). Certainly, during this period, mutual interactions between these regions must have been intense and the respective territorial/cultural borders rather permeable, factors that could also have encouraged the movement of eastern Anatolian and Caucasian people into the Upper Euphrates.

The second ‘intrusive’ moment can be dated between 2750–2500 BC (corresponding to EB II). This phase sees

Kura-Araks elements peak throughout the whole region, in connection with a large-scale restructuring of the social and political organization of local communities. In some respects, in this period, it is almost impossible to distinguish between the pace of cultural development in the Upper Euphrates and those in eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus.

The extent of this intrusion (or the adoption of intrusive elements) in the Upper Euphrates was extremely wide and was combined with radical changes in the lifestyle of these communities. Settlement patterns and territorial organization show a growth in the number of small, and short-lived occupations (such as Gelinciktepe in the Malatya plain: Palmieri 1967), and possibly also higher territorial mobility (Conti and Persiani 1993; Di Nocera 2005). Changes are also visible in architectural traditions (from the internal spatial organization of houses to the widespread use of wattle and daub architecture), in the appearance of new domestic furniture (anthropomorphic andirons and trefoil fireplaces), and in pottery traditions.

Regarding the last, red-black burnished ceramics reproduced morphological and decorative repertoires that were highly similar to those of eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus. During EB II, handles became a typical feature of pottery vessels and new shapes (large S-shaped bowls, three-handled bottles, and lids) were commonly decorated with relief, grooved, and incised decorations reproducing Kura-Araks motifs. Indeed, in EB II, the ceramic traditions of the Upper Euphrates formed part of the broader Kura-Araks world, something also shown by the fact that during EB II, RBBW pottery abandoned the traditional alternate chromatic pattern by adopting the fixed pattern (black always on the outside) of the Kura-Araks tradition.

In the Lower (Anatolian) Euphrates valley, post-Uruk developments were not so dramatic as those in the Upper Euphrates region. There is a basic continuity between the fourth and early third millennia BC territorial and occupational patterns, suggesting the stability of the

population in the region (Lupton 1996: 84–86). This same sense of continuity is confirmed by the cultural data: RBBW is only sporadically attested, and EB I Plain Simple and Late Reserved Slip pottery styles were the direct development (both in technological, morphological, and decorative terms) of the wheelmade grit-tempered Uruk pottery (Palmieri 1985; Jamieson 1993).

In spite of this strong continuity, some non-local cultural traits trickled down from the north, following the Euphrates River valley. These involve primarily the growing importance that cemeteries – completely absent during the Uruk period – and new burial customs (stone-lined cists) acquired at the beginning of the third millennium BC (Carter and Parker 1995). It has been stressed that stone-lined cists were part of the Kura-Araks burial tradition and that their first appearance in the Upper Euphrates valley must be dated to the very beginning of EB I (the Arslantepe Royal Tomb: Palumbi 2007; 2008). South of the Taurus Mountains, stone-lined cists (Figure 7.5) existed in the middle and late phases of EB I (Hasek Höyük, Nevalı Çori, Hacinebi Birecik, and Carchemish: Behm-Blancke 1984: 50–53; Becker 2007: 101–18; Stein *et al.* 1997; Sertok and Ergeç 1999; Woolley and Barnett 1952: 218–22) and continued into EB II (Lidar Höyük, Titriş: Hauptmann 1993; Algaze *et al.* 1995). The ceramic inventory from these cists included no RBBW and was exclusively made up of the same Plain Simple wares common in contemporary EB I settlements of the region. But there were other objects in these cists: metal tools and body ornaments (flat axes, chisels, double spiral-headed pins: Squadrone 2007) that, apart from the Arslantepe Royal Tomb, are comparable only to the metal repertoires from the Caucasus (Palumbi 2008: 146–48).

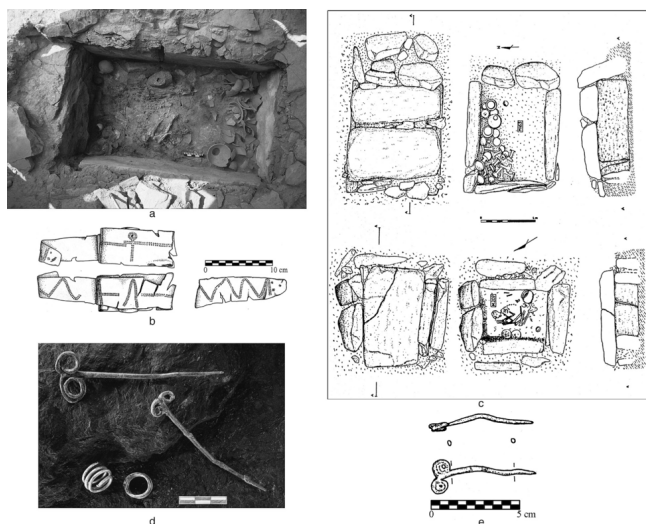


Figure 7.5. Kura-Araks cultural influence in the Euphrates valley: the ‘metallurgy + burial’ package (a,b,d with the permission of Archivio Missione Archeologica Italiana ad Arslantepe; c,e from Sertok and Ergeç 1999).

A Hurrian ethnic identity has been tentatively associated with this new funerary custom (Carter and Parker 1995: 113; Cooper 2006: 247–50; Cooper 2007). But the absence of any further cultural elements suggests that the introduction of new burial customs (together with some specific metal items) were the result of a selected (and contingent) transmission of Kura-Araks elements, when the Euphrates River valley still acted (during EB I) as a channel of these highland–lowland connections. The introduction of these elements is unconnected to any long-term process of change because in EB II (when the Taurus Mountains became a true geographical and cultural boundary between the highlands and lowlands of eastern Anatolia), these Kura-Araks funerary and metallurgical traditions were readapted to local political and cultural dynamics, and gradually abandoned.

In the northern Levant, the presence of elements of the Kura-Araks cultural package is confined to a limited stretch of the northeast Mediterranean coast and to the ‘Amuq basin, with some evidence for an extension along the

Orontes Valley. The appearance of considerable quantities of RBBW at Ras Shamra during phase III A1–2 (and to a lesser extent at a number of nearby coastal sites, such as Rousset al-Amir, Qal’at Siriani, and Tell Sukas) indicates that this tradition did not specifically avoid the Mediterranean seaboard. The ‘Khirbet Kerak’ ceramic repertoire (i.e., the RBBW tradition) from Ras Shamra closely resembles that which typifies the nearby ‘Amuq region in the first half of the third millennium BC (de Contenson 1989; 1992: 183–86), but little can be said of the detailed chronology of its appearance or of its quantity relative to coexisting pottery traditions.

In the ‘Amuq, late phase G ceramic developments can be basically likened to those of southeastern Anatolia in EB I (wheelmade Plain Simple and Late Reserved Slip ceramics), except for the presence of the completely alien Red-Black Burnished pottery tradition that appears in its uppermost levels (Braidwood and Braidwood 1960: 294). RBBW is found only sporadically in phase G, whereas in phases H and I, it is quite common, accounting for 52–55% and 35–40% of the ceramic bulk respectively (Braidwood and Braidwood 1960: 358, 398). Corresponding to these important cultural changes is a marked growth in the number of new (and small) settlements occupied during phase H (Yener *et al.* 2000: 184; Batiuk *et al.* 2005: 171).

Unfortunately, the modalities of the appearance and internal developments of RBBW in this region remain unclear. According to Braidwood and Braidwood (1960), RBBW in ‘Amuq phase H appeared together with Plain Simple and Late-Reserved Slip ceramics (EB I), but also coexisted with other pottery productions, such as Metallic Ware (dated to EB II). The association of RBBW with Plain Simple and Late Reserved Slip is not surprising, as the same pattern is found in the Upper Euphrates valley in EB I. This means that RBBW could have appeared as early as EB I (the end of phase G and early phase H) reaching its quantitative peak in EB II (that is to say, in late phase H, see Table 7.1 above).

Andirons were a further feature introduced in ‘Amuq

phase H (Braidwood and Braidwood 1960: 371–72). This horseshoe-shaped clay object, whose function was clearly related to fire and cooking activities, was very often characterized by plastic decorations depicting human faces. It clearly recalls similar fire structures from the Upper Euphrates valley dating from EB II (see below, on Pulur-Sakyol), but its origins must be sought in eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus where it was one of the most typical expressions of the Kura-Araks domestic and ritual culture.

The appearance of these intrusive Anatolian-Caucasian elements in the ‘Amuq region marked a second and later moment in the transmission of Kura-Araks culture from the eastern Anatolian highlands toward the southern lowlands at the beginning of EB II (ca. 2750 BC). It is also interesting to notice that this second ‘movement’ of Kura-Araks elements took a different path from the metallurgical and funerary traditions of the Lower Euphrates valley. RBBW and andirons seem to have followed a southwestern route, bordering on the internal slopes of the Taurus Mountains, passing by the Elbistan region (where RBBW was still present: Brown 1967), and crossing the Taurus range at the point where it merges with the Amanus Mountain range, thus flowing into the ‘Amuq plain.

The similarities between EB II RBBW in the Upper Euphrates and the RBBW in the ‘Amuq of phase H are close enough to suggest a basic synchronicity between these periods as well as close interactions between these regions (we cannot exclude migratory events). At the same time, the introduction of these foreign cultural elements was also accompanied by a local re-elaboration of these same elements, among them the fact that RBBW in the ‘Amuq is accompanied by a completely original production of red-orange slipped vessels (Braidwood and Braidwood 1960: 361, 398). Some shapes, such as the long cylindrical pot-stands and concave lids, still belong to the Anatolian and Caucasian (cooking?) traditions, but they show a very original capacity for elaborating these foreign elements in a local key.

Materials, Technologies, and Symbolic Function

The presence of Kura-Araks elements in the Upper Euphrates during the first half of the third millennium BC shows a wide variability of material combinations, with respect to historical contingencies, to the diversity of the symbolic contexts of expression, and to the growing level of involvement of local communities in interactions with the Kura-Araks world.

During EB I (beginning of the third millennium BC), while the RBBW technological tradition on its own cannot be considered as a marker of Kura-Araks intrusiveness in the region (because it was still being produced according to the traditional, local alternate chromatic pattern), the expression of Kura-Araks elements is attested in two different contexts:

- (1) In the Arslantepe VIB1 pastoralist campsite, new pottery shapes are associated with new building techniques (wattle and daub architecture).
- (2) In the stone-lined cist of the Arslantepe 'Royal' tomb, there is a rich array of metal objects, most of which belonged to Caucasian metal repertoires. This ritualized representation expresses a mortuary package used to stress and legitimize the status and political position of the buried man.

These two episodes express two different material packages (architecture + ceramic in the case of the campsite, and funerary customs + metallurgy in the case of the Royal Tomb) that would develop differently and be transmitted separately beyond the Upper Euphrates region (see [Figure 7.3](#)).

The first and more 'domestic' package, that is to say, wattle and daub building techniques and pottery traditions, continued to characterize the settlements during EB II and, as is shown by the sequence of Norşuntepe levels XXIV–XVI (Hauptmann 1982), was enriched by the appearance of very specific fire structures (trefoil fireplaces and horseshoe-

shaped andirons) of the Kura-Araks domestic tradition (Figure 7.6). In this period, then, while metal production and funerary traditions did not express such a strong Kura-Araks connotation, the marked appearance of Kura-Araks elements was especially tangible in the domestic sphere and in its related activities, as if they signalled materially the changes in the new social, symbolic, and productive role of the household.

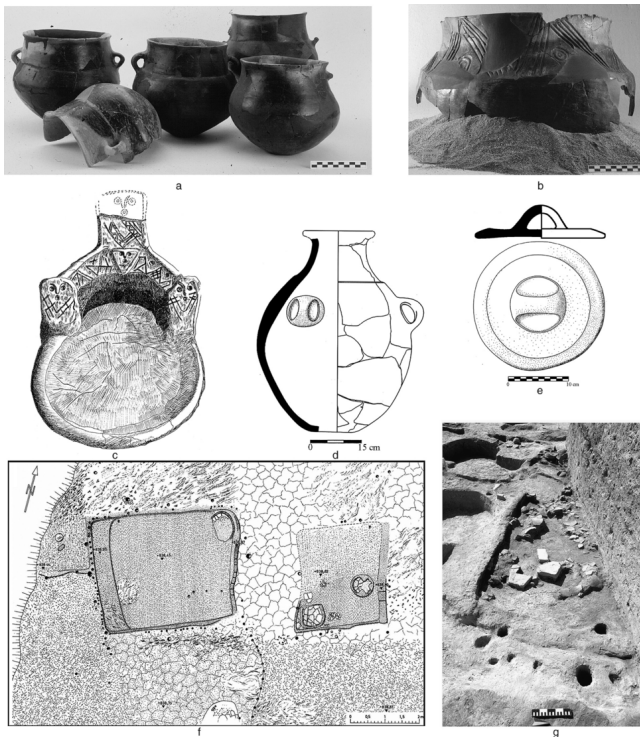


Figure 7.6. Kura-Araks cultural influence in the Euphrates valley: the ‘ceramic + andirons’ domestic package (a,b,g with the permission of Archivio Missione Archeologica Italiana ad Arslantepe; c from Koşay 1976; d,e,f from Hauptmann 1982).

From this point of view, the site of Pulur-Sakyol is enlightening (Koşay 1976). In levels XI–IX there, anthropomorphic hearths built at the center of the houses seem to have become domestic shrines and central elements for new ritual practices (ancestor cults?) attached to the

domestic sphere.

In the Lower Anatolian Euphrates, the presence of Kura-Araks traits is restricted to a rather short historical moment (EB I), to specific materials, and to a very selective realm of social and ritual expression. This is the 'funerary package' (Figure 7.5), already observed in the case of the Arslantepe Royal Tomb (stone-lined cists+metallurgy). It has been suggested that the appearance of these stone-lined cists (and cemeteries) at the beginning of the EBA could be related to the post-Uruk territorial reorganization of local societies, in connection with the growing economic importance of specialized pastoralism among the lowlands communities, and possibly also to the emergence of new roles and images of leadership (Palumbi 2007). This small package of selected Kura-Araks elements, associated exclusively with a specific ritual and symbolic sphere, would thus have been employed in the context of territorial and power negotiation strategies.

At both Ras Shamra and the 'Amuq in the northern Levant, RBBW and related cultural elements seem to be strictly connected (in terms of use and production) to the domestic and household spheres. While architectural/building traditions do not show any significant changes in comparison to earlier periods, RBBW from Ras Shamra IIA1–2 and 'Amuq phases H and I comprises vessels connected to consumption, storage, and cooking activities. Anthropomorphic andirons, which were definitely domestic furniture, appeared at the same time as the quantitative peak of RBBW, and it may be significant that some of the geometric decorations characterizing these fire-related structures bear the same motifs characterizing the contemporary red-black vessels (Braidwood and Braidwood 1960: figs 290 and 307; de Contenson 1989: fig. 9).

It is possible that RBBW, with its new functional range of pottery containers, points to different food preparation and consumption practices. RBBW and andirons certainly played an active role in the construction of a new cultural identity in the 'Amuq, one that was more closely related to those in the Upper Euphrates and Anatolian highlands. Do these new elements also signal a change in the role that household and

family organization played in the social, symbolic (and possibly also productive) life of the 'Amuq communities in the first half of the third millennium BC?

Interaction and Spatial Relations between Kura-Araks-Derived and Local Cultural Practice

At the beginning of the third millennium BC, the sociocultural picture in the Upper Euphrates region was quite composite and showed the coexistence of separate cultural identities and radically different communities. On the one hand, there were small, sedentary, mud-brick villages (Arslantepe VIB2, Norşuntepe XXVI–XXV, Tepecik and Taşkun Mevkii: Frangipane and Palmieri 1983b; Hauptmann 1982; Sagona 1994) that developed the Late-Uruk cultural heritage (wheelmade Plain Simple and Late-Reserved Slip ceramics). On the other hand, the region was also populated by other, possibly more mobile groups (as is the case with the pastoralists from Arslantepe phase VIB1) showing a strong cultural affiliation with the Kura-Araks world.

Even if these separate sociocultural entities do not seem to have physically 'lived' together (apart from the single case of Taşkun Mevkii level 3, which records the coexistence of mud-brick and wattle and daub architecture: Sagona 1994: 5–6), the sporadic presence of Kura-Araks-like pottery vessels in the sedentary villages, and of wheelmade Plain Simple pottery in the Arslantepe VIB1 campsite, suggest a constant interaction between these different communities (Palumbi 2008: 222–33). The Arslantepe Royal Tomb is another case that highlights the presence of an intense dialectic between local and foreign traditions. In the funerary arena, the different spatial positions of the ceramic and metal objects belonging to Kura-Araks and Uruk-derived traditions may have embodied symbolically the constant interaction between these coexisting sociocultural identities (Palumbi 2008: 148–55).

This sense of coexistence disappeared at the end of EB I,

and the radical changes taking place in the Upper Euphrates valley after 2750 BC are accompanied by a process of diffuse cultural homogenization oriented toward the Kura-Araks world. Even though the dichotomy between mobile and sedentary communities possibly continued at that time, this structural dialectic took place in a basically homogenous Kura-Araks cultural environment. This process was so profound that it is very hard to distinguish between 'Kura-Araks authentic/original' newcomers and local 'Kura-Araks imitating/derived' communities.

As for the Lower Anatolian Euphrates, the stone-lined cists provided a physical and symbolic space for a 'material dialogue' between some Caucasian and local traditions (the latter represented by other metal items and pottery). But this was the only specific context where the coexistence between local and Kura-Araks-derived traits has so far been shown in the region. Considering the importance that metal objects acquire in the funerary contexts of this period, it seems more likely that trade in metal ores and finished artifacts between the Upper and the Lower Euphrates valley may account for this selective Kura-Araks intrusion in the region.

At Ras Shamra, RBBW co-occurs with other pottery traditions related to both the southern Levant (in phase IIIA1) and with inland Syria and the 'Amuq region (in the later phases IIIA2 and IIIA3: Philip 1999: 49). The architectural structures excavated in phase IIIA consisted of dwellings, domestic infrastructures, and work areas (de Contenson 1992: 50). Apparently, there is no spatial or functional separation between RBBW and other pottery types, which seem to have been indifferently employed and discarded by the same people in the same contexts of activity.

It is very difficult at the moment to ascertain whether the spatial and functional coexistence of red-black and the rest of the pottery traditions attested in 'Amuq phases H and I might also indicate some physical coexistence between indigenous communities and newcomers. It has been noted that, beginning in phase H, there is a massive presence of RBBW at the same time the region records a change in

settlement patterns (Yener *et al.* 2000: 184; Batiuk *et al.* 2005: 171). According to these data, it has been suggested that the 'Amuq plain at this time (beginning in phase H) was gradually populated by new communities of exclusively RBBW users/producers (as is the case of Tabara el-Akrad: Hood 1951). Moreover, these data have been interpreted as the sign of Kura-Araks people arriving in the region (Batiuk 2005). Even if this migratory interpretation still relies almost exclusively on the evidence of surface material, it should also be considered that this territorial reorganization, accompanied by new cultural forms and practices, may have been an aspect of a larger regional restructuring involving both local social organization (the household role) and the change in the direction of the trade networks within the region. Was this assumed reorganization of trade networks the main factor favoring the introduction of new northeastern cultural elements, or was it the arrival of RBBW producers that triggered the cultural, social, and territorial restructuring of the 'Amuq during phase H (Batiuk *et al.* 2005: 171, 177)?

The End of the Kura-Araks Phenomenon

The end of the Kura-Araks phenomenon in the southern Caucasus (ca. 2500–2400 BC) was linked to a new social process of change, marked by the appearance of new funerary traditions (the Early Kurgans of Martqopi, Bedeni, and Early Trialeti), the emergence of elite groups, and the gradual abandonment of earlier Kura-Araks traditions (Edens 1995).

In this same period, at the beginning of EB III, more stable political entities and large regional centers were reconstituted in the Upper Euphrates region. Large-scale architecture and specialized activity areas (such as workshops, ritual structures, monumental residences, and defense walls) became a distinctive feature of the main EB III settlements (Arslantepe, Norşuntepe, and Korucutepe: Conti and Persiani 1993). At the same time, new hierarchical territorial patterns became visible as a possible

consequence of the re-sedentarization of local populations (Di Nocera 2005), which was also reflected in a decrease in evidence for mobile social components.

Throughout the second half of the third millennium BC, RBBW continued to be produced and to play a daily role in the realm of activities associated with storage and food consumption, even though black burnished and brown burnished wares increased considerably in terms of quantity. In EB III, RBBW is characterized by the same fixed pattern as in EB II, but the former Kura-Araks influences disappeared or were limited to some specific shapes (the decorated lids). At the same time, it is possible to observe growing technical and morphological standardization of the RBBW, including its decorative repertoires, now completely different from the old Kura-Araks ones. It seems that in EB III, as relations with the southern Caucasus weakened and connections with the Kura-Araks culture were lost, RBBW changed its social and cultural meanings and its former role of 'identity marker.' At the same time, this loss of meaning may also possibly be connected to the fact that this ware became the product of specialized pottery workshops, no longer connected with the domestic spheres of production nor embedded in the cultural and social dynamics of local households.

Horseshoe-shaped andirons seem to follow a similar trajectory to that of RBBW in the Upper Euphrates. During EB III, these andirons became a standard and ubiquitous type of domestic furniture, but this ubiquity and standardization implied a loss of their former iconographic and personifying characterization (with the disappearance of anthropomorphic decorations, andirons literally lost their 'faces'). It is possible, then, that the loss of the symbolic role formerly played by andirons in EB II, when they were central to activities connected with domestic rituals (which may themselves have strengthened the construction of household identities), could be associated with the transformation (and weakening) of the role of the household when new and stronger political institutions emerged in the late third millennium BC Upper Euphrates.

Along the Lower Euphrates valley, the stone-lined cist

burial tradition was progressively abandoned, and tended to disappear when new funerary customs (the stone chambers) became expressions of more stable social inequalities (Cooper 2006).

In the 'Amuq, the RBBW tradition continued into the early Phase I (corresponding to EB III, i.e., the early second half of the third millennium BC) with the same basic features of the former phase H (even though an increase in the red-orange slipped variant has been observed to the disadvantage of the red-black effect). The final disappearance of this ware came in phase J (EB IVA; Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: n. 11), and may be associated with the peak of the 'caliciform' horizon in western Syria (Mazzoni 1982). This widespread and highly standardized production of goblets was certainly a sign of new and semi-industrial modes of pottery manufacture. The latter were possibly the result of reorganizing production connected with the second urban revolution in the main centers of western Syria (Ebla) in the second half of the third millennium BC (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: 242–43; Cooper 2006: 200). The connection between the disappearance of the RBBW tradition and the takeover of highly specialized forms of pottery production may have been a causal relation. Here, it is important to stress that andirons also disappeared, suggesting once again their strong symbolic and functional associations with RBBW, and the fact that the formation of powerful state institutions may have altered (and depleted) the former social function and productive role of the household, where RBBW and andirons were most likely made and used.

Nonetheless, the disappearance of Kura-Araks-related material expressions in the northern Levant (RBBW and andirons) may have resulted from other factors. On the one hand, the formation of the new city-states of Syria in the second half of the third millennium BC may have encouraged (and possibly obliged) the construction of completely new cultural identities. On the other hand, the growing territorial and commercial competition between the different city-states of Syria may have caused or favored radical changes in the interregional networks of trade and

exchange, and in construction of new ones. (From the middle of the third millennium BC, for example, Cilicia starts to be more closely and regularly connected with the eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus, and western Anatolia: Mellink 1991; 1993; Knapp 2008: 110–30.) These transformations may have weakened or gravely interrupted the former Anatolian-Levantine corridor of communication, which had fueled – through movements of people, and flows of goods and information – developments in those Kura-Araks-related cultural elements that linked eastern Anatolia with the northern and southern Levant during the first half of the third millennium BC.

The Southern Levant

Representing the southwestern extremity of the Kura-Araks cultural province, the southern Levant exhibits a chronologically truncated and culturally distant expression of the features described in more northerly regions.

Chronology and Extent

Khirbet Kerak Ware (KKW), generally acknowledged to be the south Levantine expression of the Kura-Araks ceramic tradition, appears as a major component in a number of excavated sites in and adjacent to the Jordan river valley: Hazor, Tel Bet Yerah (Khirbet Kerak), Affula, Tel Qishyon, Tell esh-Shuna, Tel Yaqush, and Tel Beth Shean.¹ At all these sites, KKW (and a small number of associated artifacts – see below) is introduced as a complete, locally produced, ceramic package, all at once (in archaeological terms), i.e., within a single stratigraphic phase (Figure 7.7). The introduction of KKW coincides at each site either with noticeable (although not revolutionary) changes in the local ceramic repertoire, or with the renewal of settlement after a gap in occupation. This change is considered to mark the beginning of the EB III in the southern Levant, and is an expression of a broad shift in the quality of Early Bronze urbanism that comes in the wake of a crisis that affected virtually all EB II towns and villages. While the precise nature of this crisis eludes us, its principal effect was the

partial or complete abandonment of numerous settlements. The people who made and used KKW thus arrived at EB III sites in the context of a regeneration of urbanism on a somewhat altered footing (Greenberg 2002).

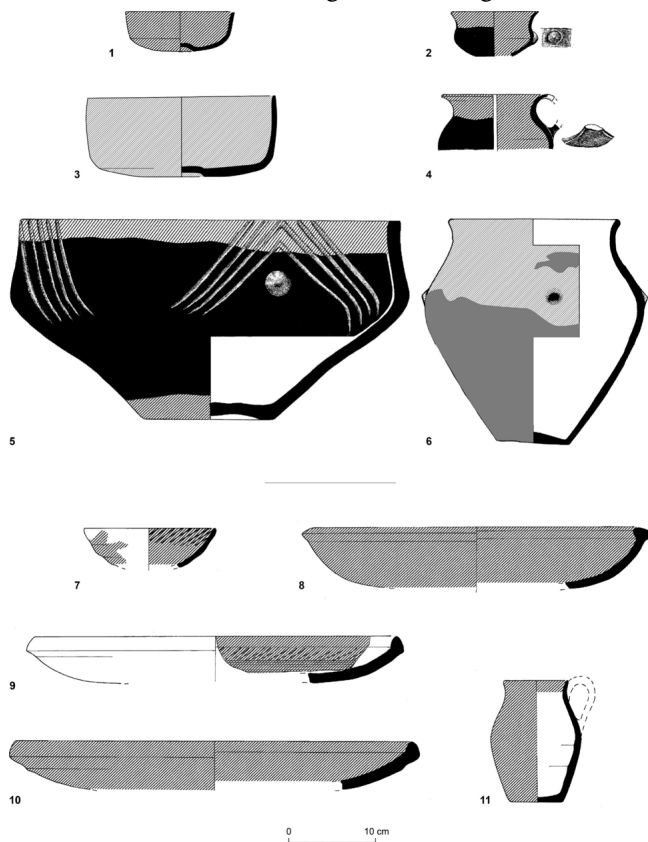


Figure 7.7. KKW vessels (1–6) contrasted with serving vessels in the local tradition (7–11), from Tel Bet Yerah.

The sites noted above fall into two categories: sites in which KKW was added to and existed alongside a local pottery repertoire (Bet Yerah, Hazor, Qishyon), and sites in which the KKW largely replaces the local component, either immediately (Shuna) or following a brief phase of coexistence (Yaquash, Bet Shean). At the latter sites, which are never more than unfortified villages, KKW so dominates the assemblage that local traditional industries appear to have been put out of business. In contrast to the Egyptian

case, therefore, the largest sites with a prominent tradition of KKW production are extant EB III towns (Bet Yerah, Hazor) with a strong local component, rather than ‘pure’ KKW settlements.

While it is not imperative that the arrival of KKW producers/consumers at the above-mentioned sites was entirely contemporaneous, there is no compelling reason to suggest otherwise. That does not, however, apply to its arrival as a minor component at neighboring sites, or to the longevity of the phenomenon at each site. At some sites, there are five or six phases associated with the ware (Bet Shean, Bet Yerah); at others, one or two (Hazor, Yaqush). It may thus be assumed that following the initial introduction of the ware – and of the people who produced and consumed it – KKW communities followed a variety of trajectories, until production ceased. There is nothing to suggest the incremental addition of Kura-Araks-type wares following the initial arrival of KKW producers.

In terms of absolute chronology, the most recent attempts to provide a radiocarbon framework for south Levantine EBA chronology suggest a relatively early date for the onset of EB III, probably before 2800 Cal BC (Philip and Millard 2000; Regev *et al.* 2012). This considerably shortens the timeline for the arrival of the Kura-Araks tradition in the south Levant, making it virtually coeval with the introduction of RBBW in the ‘Amuq region of the northern Levant. Such a shortened timeline is germane to the interpretation of the entire phenomenon, as we shall see below.

Materials, Technologies, and Symbolic Function

In the case of the Upper Euphrates region, as in that of EB I Egyptian establishments in the southern Levant, contact with the source culture was immediate and mutual, allowing the precise recreation of the homeland cultural media in the new setting. In the case of KKW and its relation to the Kura-Araks sources, a much longer chain of transmission must be

assumed. The articulation of social difference by migrant societies is an ongoing negotiation involving the re-inscription of tradition and authorized hybridization (Bhabha 1994). The association of a site or house with migrants or indigenes might therefore be based on a sliding scale or continuum; we are not seeking a complete ‘package’ but evidence of certain recurrent dispositions that might set apart the newcomer from the local. Over time, these dispositions will be attenuated, until the distinction is lost and the former marker of cultural identity either disappears or takes on a new meaning.

In the southern Levant, the Kura-Araks tradition is expressed solely in the domestic sphere. Within that sphere, the tradition is represented primarily by a rich and varied pottery repertoire and by the use of portable hearths as part of a unique cooking ensemble (see below). A possible correlation between KKW domestic assemblages and certain architectural details has been observed at one site at least (Paz 2009), but it requires corroboration. No metallurgy has yet been associated with KKW, but this may well be a function of the absence of graves (no cemeteries at all have been found at KKW sites or in the northern part of the southern Levant in general, and this seems to have been part of the local urban attitude to the dead).²

The identification of a community of producers and consumers of KKW is based on a broad range of individual, household, and communal practices encompassing both production and consumption of its typical products. *Chaîne opératoire* analysis of KKW and traditional local production (Iserlis 2009; Iserlis *et al.* 2010) has established that, at all sites, KKW differs fundamentally from local practice in the following parameters: choice of raw materials (usually local soils) and inclusions (often including grog and organics); formation techniques (especially the resistance to wheel manufacture); surface treatment (thick slip and burnish) and decoration (incised or embossed); and firing (red and black coloration achieved through oxidation/reduction). When the prescribed sequence of actions was rigorously followed, which was the norm, it led to a consistently high-quality

finish, clearly set off from local production. Despite the high degree of know-how invested in their production, KKW vessels show no standardization; the potters may even be said to have resisted standardization (or simplification) in their consistent rejection of wheel-coiling and their adherence to labor-intensive formation techniques. KKW appears to follow the ‘learning network’ (Gosselain 1998) model of knowledge transmission, that is, variation within a recognizable tradition created by daily reproduction in contexts of informal instruction. In this model, information moves both vertically in society, from old to young, and horizontally, through social contact of age peers.

The color of the vessels offers some interesting contrasts. As already noted for the northern Levant, the use of red-only burnished vessels is introduced south of the Taurus, in conjunction with either new forms or significant variations on old ones (e.g., vertical-walled bowls and biconical stands). Red-black vessels are generally those that have clear antecedents in eastern Anatolia or the southern Caucasus. Since red slip was a very common feature of local pottery in the Levant, its use on KKW may be seen as an adaptation to local preference. In this manner, an element of negotiation with local culture is introduced into Kura-Araks-derived practice, and with it a recognition of the distance traveled from its place of origin (Greenberg 2007).

Typologically, KKW bowls and kraters comprise a functional replacement to local mixing and serving vessels (for liquids and solids), whereas the KKW cooking ensemble – comprised of a local-style cooking pot placed on a KKW andiron and covered with a distinctive KKW lid – co-opts a local cooking vessel into KKW practice, presumably in the service of a distinctive cuisine (Figure 7.8). Many of the fine cups and large mixing vessels are both asymmetrical and provided with a remarkably narrow base; this might explain the large numbers of biconical stands of all sizes that form a distinctive component in the assemblage.

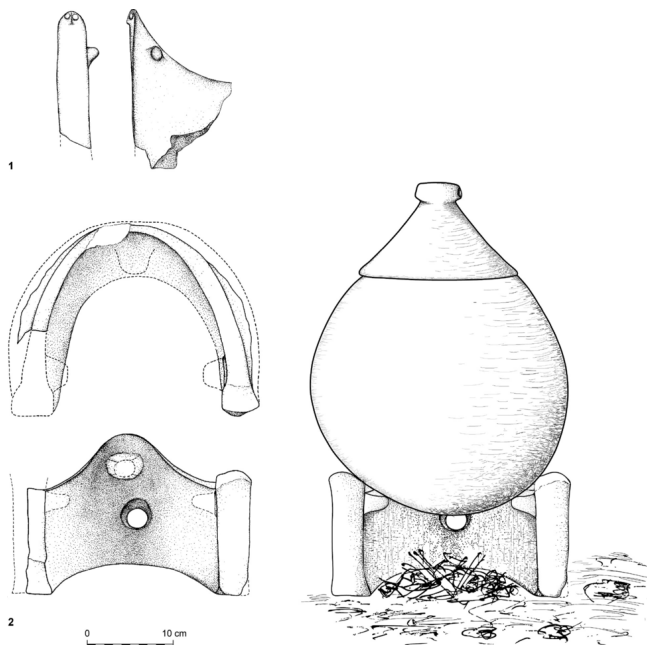


Figure 7.8. KKW andirons and the reconstructed cooking ensemble.

The shape and asymmetry of the KKW vessels require a *technique du corps* for the daily routines of food consumption that differs markedly from those prescribed by local tradition. A prime example is the contrast between the ubiquitous large serving platter and coarse bowls used locally as the main serving vessels and the deep KKW kraters and fine-ware bowls and goblets (see [Figure 7.7](#)). The former, which grow to a remarkable size in EB III, seem to have played a role in communal meals and labor recruitment, whereas the latter seem to cater to a different palate, accustomed perhaps to stews and the consumption of beer or wine.

The color, luster, and tactile qualities of KKW are additional, and very obvious, attributes that communicated difference, establishing sensory boundaries between KKW-rich and KKW-poor settings. Such boundaries existed between houses (see below), and even within them: the absence of a KKW storage vessel implies that local-style jars

and *pithoi* fulfilled storage functions, even at sites where KKW was overwhelmingly dominant. In its formal and technological priorities, KKW thus embodies values related to the internal workings of the household and perhaps to the relations between houses; it does not concern interaction with the outside world such as storage and exchange, or large-scale labor recruitment (platters). It may thus be characterized as a mode of resistance to the collective values of EB III southern Levant urbanism.

Interaction and Spatial Relations between Kura-Araks-Derived and Local Cultural Practice

Ever since the initial recognition of the KKW phenomenon, it has been clear that its distribution was limited to a small number of sites in the Jordan valley (where it was very abundant), and that only small quantities of the ware appeared outside its main distribution area, as the pottery does not travel well. The introduction of KKW into an extant EB settlement system during a time of crisis created three configurations: occupied urban sites with a newly introduced KKW component, abandoned sites newly occupied by KKW producers/consumers, and sites at which there was only an ephemeral KKW component.

Several recent studies provide additional and highly relevant details:

- (a) Where KKW is introduced into an extant site, there tends to be segregation between KKW-rich and KKW-poor contexts (Greenberg 2007; Paz 2009). At first, previously open or abandoned lots, as well as disused public structures, are covered with KKW-rich deposits that suggest temporary construction within a partly abandoned settlement. This is particularly noticeable in the so-called Granary ('Circles Building') at Tel Bet Yerah – a 1000 sq m public building of the early EB III that was completely given over to a KKW 'squat' within a short time of its construction. Contemporary houses that show continuity with EB II have little or

no KKW in them. Following this phase, new houses are built; these maintain the segregation between KKW-rich and KKW-poor contexts shown in the early phase.

- (b) When KKW producers/consumers arrived at smaller sites in the Jordan valley, a first phase of coexistence of KKW and the local tradition, similar to that of the larger sites, was followed by a second phase in which the quantity and diversity of local EBA wares was severely diminished (Mazar *et al.* 2000; Novacek 2007; Iserlis *et al.* 2012).
- (c) Often, even individual instances of KKW pots at sites removed from the core area of production were made locally; i.e., the presence even of a single pot could indicate the presence of a KKW potter at the distant site (Zuckerman *et al.* 2009).

As noted above, by combining a full KKW repertoire with the hybridized cooking ensemble, a household could provide for nearly all its needs without recourse to traditional, local industries. The principal exception would have been that of storage. Paz (2009) has suggested that storage was associated with permanence, and hence was deliberately left out of the migrant's 'package,' along with other attributes of fixed settlement such as the central hearth. As a result, where local, traditional wares were available (i.e., at mixed settlements), the KKW-rich households always contained a local component (and vice versa: the KKW-poor households had a KKW component). Nonetheless, the different households were clearly defined in terms of cuisine, cooking, and table manners. Such differences surely affected modes of interaction between different communities in the same settlement.

This mode of coexistence, however, was too volatile to last any great length of time. Thus, at the large sites, a process of assimilation gradually changed the role of KKW. It lost its strong identity-preserving function and took on other meanings while retaining its technical integrity. At smaller sites, KKW practice became exclusive, leaving no room for

local wares and traditional habits.

The production of isolated examples of KKW at sites distant from the main KKW communities has been explained as the work of itinerant potters (Zuckerman *et al.* 2009). This seems unlikely, as the products – usually fine-ware bowls – had local functional equivalents, and one can hardly imagine that a potter would have traveled for days only for such a purpose. It is more likely that the very act of creation was a culturally significant activity, a statement of identity through technology. Thus, KKW should not be viewed as an industry at all in the sense that applies to local EBA production. Both the production and the use of the pot required a set of prescribed actions and movements that served as a mode of performative commemoration, linking the owner of even a single vessel to the community of origin.

The End of Khirbet Kerak Ware

Unlike the Egyptian episode of EB I, which ended abruptly and completely, and clearly as the result of a deliberate, politically motivated withdrawal, the KKW communities appear to have taken different paths toward a gradual dissolution or absorption in local society. At Tel Bet Yerah, where – at some locations – KKW seems to maintain itself as a separate entity through five or six stratigraphic phases, there are clear signs of the attenuation of the original role of the assemblage in setting apart a community of producers and users. In the latter phases, the segregation between KKW-rich and KKW-poor households is no longer evident; the ware is spread more evenly – and hence thinly – in the site as a whole. Although the technological values are maintained (with some loss of diversity: Iserlis 2009), the values attached to the pots themselves were almost certainly altered. Eventually, KKW became one of a variety of ways in which EB III persons could communicate status, diversity, or mere individual preference. This can be seen as a natural process, especially in view of the absence of any communication between ‘KKW people’ and the other parts of the Kura-Araks diaspora. At other sites with a strong KKW

affiliation – whether large and fortified, such as Hazor, or rural, such as Yaqush – as well as at sites with meager finds introduced into a local repertoire, all that can be said is that KKW does not survive the dissolution of urban life at the end of EB III. It is not in evidence at any of the southern Levant sites associated with the post-urban Intermediate Bronze Age (IBA), nor is there any residue of the values associated with KKW in the material culture of the IBA.

Interestingly, there is a certain similarity between the trajectories of the southern Levant and those of the distant north in terms of the shift in burial customs and strategies of status differentiation. As urbanism, with its limited concern with mortuary expression, declined, it was replaced by rural and semi-nomadic societies in which mortuary ritual and display became far more prominent. Mirroring the changes in the southern Caucasus and the northern Levant, KKW was entirely supplanted by the local equivalent of those northern Kurgan cultures.

To sum up this point, although the KKW phenomenon is not in itself strongly correlated with urban living – in its aversion to commoditization, in the absence of an architectural tradition, and in its focus on the domestic unit – it is nonetheless a feature of the urban EBA southern Levant. This could point, perhaps counterintuitively, to a specialized function for KKW producers/consumers in an integrated urban setting; such a function could not be maintained as towns were abandoned in the latter part of the third millennium BC.

Discussion: The Nature of the Kura-Araks ‘Expansion’ in Anatolia and the Levant

In contrast to Egyptian and Mesopotamian expansions, it is difficult to identify a specific core region from which the Kura-Araks phenomenon emerged and that served as the crucible of its ongoing cultural development. From its very inception, it seems to be a reproducible set of principles,

codified in various aspects of material culture but only loosely tied to a specific landscape. As a set of principles, it seems to have allowed those who identified with it enough flexibility to adapt to a wide variety of ecological, social, and political circumstances. Kura-Araks identity was thus dispersed over a broad area, in discreet habitats. Some of these were contiguous, and their continued interaction can be documented; others were detached and had a brief independent development. In contrast to the earlier colonizers, 'Kura-Araks people' did not exploit local resources for the sake of outside interests, did not promote asymmetric contact or status differentiation, and do not seem to be a central factor in third millennium BC social and political change – although they do appear to have filled in the gaps left by the dissolution of the Uruk network.

In the Upper Euphrates, the greater part of the third millennium BC witnesses the interplay between internal local developments and the growing involvement of the Kura-Araks world. In EB I, Arslantepe phase VIB1 and the Royal Tomb can be considered as short-term events against a local cultural background that maintained elements of the Uruk heritage. We cannot exclude *a priori* that Kura-Araks people moved or migrated into the Upper Euphrates from the east, but an alternate hypothesis should not be ruled out: that the Kura-Araks elements represent a slow but progressive reorientation of the local communities toward the expanding cultural and political spheres of eastern Anatolia and the southern Caucasus, and an attempt to construct new sociocultural identities. The large-scale transformations that took place at the beginning of EB II were the results of a radical process of change, inspired and influenced by models of the contemporary Kura-Araks communities. Migratory events may have caused some of these radical changes, but the total involvement of the region's entire population in this transformative process requires us to take account of the active role played by the local, extant communities in this 'desire' (and need) for change.

As we move from north to south, we become increasingly

preoccupied with the definition of the culture as Kura-Araks-derived and as a bounded social unit – an identity or possibly an ethnicity. This reflects not only the distance of the terminal variants of the culture ('Amuq RBB and southern Levantine KKW) from the 'source,' but also the function of the Taurus as a boundary: to its north, we can talk about cultural expansion, diffusion, reorientation, etc., i.e., cultural transformations within a greater region that had always been characterized by mutual interaction and mobility. Moreover, this was a region implicated in the very process of the formation of a Kura-Araks 'identity.' To its south, we are looking at a movement by carriers of the tradition into regions that were probably perceived by them as alien, i.e., a movement of people, its materialization filtered by the contingencies of the migration: who moved, why they moved, what they left behind, what they absorbed or reinvented en route. As they move, they interact with local societies, objectifying their cultural difference (Jones 1996: 69) by persevering in certain forms of material practice, time space routines, and ritual while adapting to local lifeways. In this context, the burial/settlement divergence visible in the contrast between the Levantine littoral and the Lower Anatolian Euphrates seems to be of particular significance. If, as we have already suggested, the adoption of cist tombs and south Caucasian-style metal ornaments in Arslantepe VIB1 and the Lower Euphrates was a strategy employed in local power negotiation, then the absence of this element in enclaves of Kura-Araks-derived settlement in the Levant could indicate that the territorial element was not in play. In other words, these communities were not in the business of establishing a claim over territory in the Levant, but were entering it as foreign migrants, with the consent – or collusion? – of local populations.

What could have motivated the movement of the Kura-Araks communities – or parts of them – into such vast new areas? A possible answer brings us back to the discussion in the first part of the chapter. The fourth millennium BC Urukian and Egyptian northward thrust – both interpreted as responses to a swiftly growing thirst for technologies, raw

materials, and interaction with other societies (Wengrow 2010) – created unprecedented opportunities in every area affected by their expansion while disrupting earlier lines of communication. For example, a vigorous late fifth/early fourth millennium BC movement of arsenical copper from the south Caucasus to the Ghassulian Levant was entirely blocked and rerouted toward Mesopotamia from the mid-fourth millennium BC onward. The demise of both expansions at the cusp of the third millennium BC created a vacuum, particularly with regard to the extraction, processing, and trade of metals, especially copper. With tin-bronze still rare and confined to prestige objects produced at the outer edges of the eastern fertile crescent, with Cypriot copper perhaps still to be discovered by mainland consumers (but see Philip *et al.* 2003; Webb *et al.* 2006; Knapp 2013: 261, 271–72), and with the advent of the silver standard still in the future (when it is associated with late third/early second millennium BC economies of scale), mobile Kura-Araks communities may have been positioned to provide a vital technological and commercial lubricant for the dissemination of copper and copper technology in the postcolonial Levant (see also Wilkinson 2009).

The performance of a specific role within local societies of the Levant can account for some of the peculiar features of the migrant community: their stubborn conservatism – as expressed in pottery, in their symbolism, and in their resistance to assimilation – and the linkage between their demise and that of local social structures (best exemplified in the southern Levant). Their continued link to metallurgy may be reflected in the obvious pyrotechnical skills and possible metal skeuomorphism (Wilkinson 2009) of their pottery, while the absence of large quantities of metals south of the Taurus can be explained as a correlate of the absence of tombs in general – a feature that they would have had adopted from local practice – and of the low social status of the migrants. The Arslantepe tomb is a rare case where the power of the elite permitted a metal hoard to survive, and it shows that metals were an important part of the Kura-Araks way of life.

Concluding Thoughts

Whether the Kura-Araks-derived ‘package’ remained the domain of migrants alone or was emulated or adopted by local groups who might have already been at the social margins of the local urban centers (Philip 1999) remains a point of contention, with one of us (R.G.) tending to the former position, and the other (G.P.) to the latter. In either case, the trans-regional and long-range perspective taken in this chapter allows us to view the Kura-Araks expansion of the third millennium BC as a postcolonial phenomenon.

In the former areas of Uruk influence, it can be seen as postcolonial in terms of the disruption of former colonial structures and of the reaction and rejection of the resulting empowerment of local elites. This empowerment was founded on political and economic centralization, ideas of urbanization, redistribution, control over labor, specialized production, and a pronounced social hierarchy, while the Kura-Araks model was founded on household production and on a kin-based horizontal social structure. It can also be seen as subversive to the colonial order in the manner that it employed (in a reverse direction) some of the same routes and networks of communication used during the colonial period. The extension of these networks beyond the Taurus, however, would have implied different forms of negotiation, contact, and communication, rhizomatic rather than dendritic in their growth, possibly more personalized and community-centered than before.

The rhizomatic analogy can also help us to characterize the extension of Kura-Araks-derived communities southward along the Levantine corridor and, to a limited extent, along the Levantine coast. While each of the zones of settlement flourished on their own, contact between them must have been limited. For the present, the existence of ‘flows’ of raw materials or finished products cannot be substantiated. Migration or cultural transmission must have been conditioned by the identification of opportunities in new places.

In the context of the third millennium BC Near Eastern

world, this model was in many ways anachronistic and would soon be swept aside by the resurgence of Syrian and Anatolian urbanism and the eventual reestablishment of long-distance trade underwritten by centralized polities. Nonetheless, the option of resisting state-based identities through the establishment of family- and community-based cultural and technological networks was one that remained embedded in east Mediterranean society as a powerful, if often submerged, structuring principle.

Acknowledgments

We thank Pierre de Miroschedji, Steve Batiuk, and Yuval Yekutieli who provided base maps, and Yulia Gottlieb, Ami Brauner, and Gil Breger for their assistance in preparing the illustrations.

Notes

1 For overviews of the Khirbet Kerak issue, see: Hennessy 1967; Amiran 1969; Esse 1991; de Miroschedji 2000; Greenberg and Goren 2009. Additional information on specific assemblages can be found in Leonard 1992; Mazar *et al.* 2000; Greenberg *et al.* 2006; Novacek 2007; and in the references cited above. In the following discussion, references are provided for specific details only.

2 The 2010–13 excavations at Tel Bet Yerah (Khirbet Kerak) have yielded copper prills and artifacts, as well as wattle and daub fragments and burnished plaster that might be compared to Kura-Araks installations. These await further study at the time of writing.

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8 The Anatolian Context of Philia Material Culture in Cyprus

Christoph Bachhuber

Abstract

Archaeologists working in Anatolia have been underrepresented in the debates on the so-called Anatolianising of Philia material culture that marks the beginning of the Bronze Age in Cyprus. In this chapter, I outline how this phenomenon in Cyprus was related to changes across the western and southern regions of the Anatolian peninsula. I examine settlement patterns and related interactions with the landscape, and those aspects of Early Bronze Age material culture in Anatolia that have most informed the Philia debates. These same features of Anatolian societies are also the most informative for studying a transitional period on the peninsula near the middle of the third millennium BC. My analysis of these transformations leads me to revisit the various models used to explain social change on Cyprus.

Introduction

In the past decade, interrelationships in the third millennium BC between the tectonic arc regions of Anatolia and the Caucasus, and regions in the eastern Mediterranean basin including the Levant and Cyprus, have re-emerged as a vital dialogue in Mediterranean prehistory. For almost a century, interpretations of material culture and social change in the Mediterranean basin have looked to these tectonic arc

regions for the origins of such developments. Philia material culture in Cyprus and the Early Transcaucasian influences in the Levant are parallel developments in the third millennium BC and mark the beginning of the Bronze Age in both regions.

Social change in the Levant and in Cyprus has been studied within migratory cultural-historical, autonomist processual and migratory postprocessual paradigms that reflect theoretical developments within the larger discipline of archaeology as practiced in the Anglo-American tradition. The most recent dialogue on Philia material culture in Cyprus and the corresponding Early Transcaucasian developments in the Levant has been reinvigorated by renewed consideration of migration (for the Levant, see Greenberg and Goren 2009; Greenberg and Palumbi, this volume; for Cyprus, see Webb and Frankel 2007; 2013; Knapp 2008: 47–53, 103–14; 2013: 264–77; Kouka 2009: 36).

Interactionist debates continue to be dominated by practitioners in the Mediterranean basin, with rare efforts by archaeologists working in the Levant or on Cyprus to consult in a substantial way the archaeology of the tectonic arc. Here, I draw Early Bronze Age (EBA) Anatolia into the mainstream of Mediterranean prehistory by discussing the peninsula in relation to Philia material culture.

For the past 50 years, Anglo-American trained archaeologists working in the Mediterranean have been dependent on one of two pioneers as the voices for Bronze Age Anatolia. The great archaeological legacies of James Mellaart and Machteld Mellink include a kind of diplomacy in a country that continues to be exotic to the methodological mainstream of the Mediterranean Bronze Age. Nevertheless, Mellaart never entered the Philia debates, and Mellink offered only one foray (Mellink 1991). Subsequently, few Anatolian prehistorians have addressed this problem (cf. C. Eslick, in Frankel *et al.* 1996; Kouka 2009: 36–40).

It has long been noted that the greatest affinity between

Philia material culture and EBA Anatolia is with the period termed ‘Early Bronze (EB) II’ in the western and southern regions of the peninsula (Table 8.1, Figure 8.1a). Originally, I began this chapter by considering whether EB II is a meaningful chronological distinction, and chose instead EB I–II as a more appropriate (but ultimately unsatisfactory) chronological marker. In western and southern Anatolia, at least, enough survey and settlement data exist to inform the meaning of EB I–II. The transition to EB III is also salient for understanding the Anatolian context of Philia material culture.

Year (BCE)	Cyprus	Anatolian peninsula	Troia	Demicihöyük	Karataş	Tarsus	Syro-Meso		
2000	EC I-II	Transitional	IV			EB IIIb	Ur III		
2100							Guti		
2200		EB III	III			EB IIIa	Akkad		
2300			II				abandoned	abandoned	Markikhh IIb1
2400	Philia			Brak L					
2500	Late Chalc.	EB I-II		I	P-Q	VI			EB II
2600			M-N				V	Brak K	
2700	H								
2800									G
2900					F	III			
3000			D				II		
	I								
		No stratigraphy							

Table 8.1. Chronological chart for the Early Bronze Age in Anatolia and adjacent regions.

I address those aspects of Anatolian societies that have most informed or otherwise influenced the debates, including pottery and related concerns with food and drink consumption; the production, exchange and consumption of metal; and reconstructions of secondary products’ industries and economies. Each of these thematic sections is divided into three parts: (1) Philia significance; (2) EB I–II; and (3) transition to EB III. These themes are also among the most consequential for understanding the Anatolian scene during the EBA.

EB I–II and EB III: Settlement Patterns

EB II in central and western Anatolia can be differentiated

from EB III by the identification of a repertoire of wheelmade pottery in the latter (see below), although the division between EB I and EB II is far from clear. Distinctions between EB I and EB II normally have a site-specific chronological logic, which has yet to be observed or successfully applied regionally or pan-regionally. Most of the difficulty resides in the artificial construction of a tripartite chronological schema that follows the Aegean conventions of EB I, II and III. An additional difficulty involves the regionalised pottery traditions that characterise the whole of the peninsula in the earlier half of the third millennium BC (Efe 2003: fig. 5), frustrating attempts to synthesise chronologies. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, I differentiate EB I–II settlements (ca. 3000–2500 BC) from EB III settlements (ca. 2500–2200 BC; see Table 8.1).

It has long been noted that the greatest affinity between Philia material culture and Anatolia is with the western and southern regions of the peninsula (Frankel *et al.* 1996) (Figure 8.1a). Excavations and surveys in these regions are revealing a notable trend. From the Neolithic to the end of the EBA, the frequency of identified sites along Anatolia’s arable alluvia is highest during EB I–II (Figure 8.1b and Table 8.2). The masking of Neolithic and Chalcolithic sites by alluviation may account for some of this pattern (see below), but settlement masking cannot explain the dramatic drop in the number of EB III sites from the EB I–II peak.

Table 8.2. Numbers of sites identified in regional surveys showing the highest numbers during EB I–II, and a sharp decline in EB III.

	Acerar Neolit 8000– 7000 BC	Ceram Neolit 7000– 6000 BC	Early Chalcc 6000– 4500 BC	Late Chalcc 4500– 3000 BC	EB I–II 3000– 2500 BC	EB III 2500– 2200 BC
Konya Plain, Çarşamba Fana	6	1	15	15	38	7

Lakes District, Sagalassos Hinterland ^b	0	3	6	5	12	0
Lycia, Elmali Plain ^c	0	3	0	8	11	4*
The Troad ^d					30+	1

^a Boyer *et al.* 2006: graph 2.

^b Vanhaverbeke and Waelkens 2003: graph 2.

^c Eslick 2009: 214, p1.1.

^d Bieg *et al.* 2009: p1.1; S. Blum, pers. comm.

* Including Karataş which was abandoned early in EB III.

The reduced number of EB III sites was first interpreted by Mellaart (1963) in his surveys of the Konya Plain and generated a well-known migration hypothesis. He proposed that the destruction and abandonment of EB II settlements were caused by the movements of Indo-European peoples who swept down from the eastern Balkans and destroyed the settlement of Troy II. Subsequently, these people were presumed responsible for the diffusion of northwest Anatolian culture in their eastward migration (Mellaart 1966: 175–77).

Currently, models of social change in the transition from EB I–II to EB III have replaced a diffusionist agency of migration with an agency of trade (e.g. Şahoğlu 2005; Efe

2007), particularly as evidence for long-distance exchange becomes more pronounced in the transition to EB III (see below). Few studies since, however, have offered an alternative explanation for the differences between EB I-II and EB III settlement patterns (i.e. the decrease in site frequency). The recent Konya Plain Surveys have prioritised geomorphology and mark a pendulum swing to a processual approach for interpreting the changes (Boyer *et al.* 2006). This project has explored the consequences of alluviation during the EBA. Topographical troughs on the Çarşamba Fan in the Konya Plain supported farming communities since the Neolithic, but alluviation and the consequent infilling of these troughs during the EBA created a less arable landscape (Boyer *et al.* 2006: 693–95). The alluviation corresponds with the dramatic decrease in the number of EB III settlements on the Çarşamba fan from the EB I-II peak (Table 8.2) (Boyer *et al.* 2006: 689).

A recent palynological study in the Eski Acıgöl crater-lake bed in the eastern environs of the Anatolian Plateau may illuminate the accelerated erosion (Roberts *et al.* 2001; Boyer *et al.* 2006). During the Late Holocene, a significant reduction in oak woodland is observed, contemporary with the proliferation of several anthropogenic species. The approximate dating of this event (4500–4000 Cal BP) (Roberts *et al.* 2001: 731) is roughly contemporary with EB III in Anatolia and reveals anthropogenic impact on woodland (Roberts *et al.* 2001: 732–33).

The crowding of EB I-II settlements in Anatolia's alluvia would have exerted pressure on indigenous forest (see above, Figure 8.1b and Table 8.2), in particular through increased demands on timber for fuel, construction materials and land for cultivation and pasturage (see below). Woodland clearance and the subsequent instability in the landscape may have been one variable in the unstable settlement patterns (Boyer *et al.* 2006), although I am wary of replacing Mellaart's extreme cultural-historical model with an environmentally determinist one that does not take into account the material culture of these societies.

Abandonment was surely a more complex development and needs to be addressed with a more socially informed understanding of EB I–II and EB III communities.

Ceramic Technology and the Consumption of Food and Drink

Philia Significance

Early observations about the Anatolianising elements of Philia material culture within Cyprus focused on Red Polished pottery (Dikaios 1961: 13–15), in particular on a beak-spouted and handled pitcher form. These elegant pitchers became one of the emblematic vessels of Philia material culture, in part because they were originally thought to have been quite different from anything observed in earlier periods in Cyprus, and also because they find good comparanda with EB I–II Anatolian forms (Figure 8.2). Interpretations drew on Mellaart's Indo-European invasions across Anatolia. Various pottery types in Philia tomb assemblages were used to identify either the arrival of splinter groups of these same waves of Indo-Europeans, or of Anatolian migrants fleeing to Cyprus from the disruptions caused by the Indo-European invaders (Frankel *et al.* 1996: 39). Similar kinds of migration scenarios continue to inform some interpretations of Philia material culture (Kouka 2009: 36).



Figure 8.2. Beak-spouted pitcher from Karataş settlement deposit, from Eslick ([2009](#): pl. 90e). Courtesy, Bryn Mawr College Excavations in Lycia.

It was against the Indo-European narratives of the 1950s and 1960s that the processual ideological struggle began in Cyprus. In critiquing migrations and related perspectives on ethnicity and material culture, archaeologists began to interpret the Philia phenomenon as a local development and a result of stimulus diffusion (e.g. Knapp [1990](#); Manning [1993](#)). The Red Polished wares gained a new kind of significance – representing innovative drinking behaviour that was focused on the production and consumption of

alcohol (Manning 1993: 45; Webb and Frankel 2013: 62, 70). Alcohol consumption has been interpreted as one way for groups to consolidate and convert agricultural resources into a kind of social capital in contexts of hospitality and conviviality, something purportedly learned through contact with Anatolian communities.

Pottery from subsequent excavations of settlements with Philia material culture (Marki *Alonia*; Frankel and Webb 2006: 90–104) and Late Chalcolithic settlements just predating the Philia phenomenon (Kissonerga *Mosphilia*; Bolger *et al.* 1998) have diminished both the Philia association of ceramic innovations in Cyprus, and the utility of linking the Philia ceramic repertoires to elite contexts of pottery use. Regarding the former, two fundamental features of the proposed Anatolianising phenomenon in Philia pottery have been argued to predate the Philia phase: dark monochrome burnished surfaces and extravagantly spouted pouring forms (Bolger 2007: 173–75). The Late Chalcolithic origin of these innovations in Cyprus challenges reconstructions of migrating Anatolians to explain the transfer of pottery technology in Philia material culture (e.g. Frankel 2000; Webb and Frankel 2007: 200–201).

An improved understanding of the contexts of pottery use in Philia settlements has also complicated the relationship between Red Polished pottery and elite activities. Until recently, studies of Philia pottery have been necessarily confined to mortuary assemblages (e.g. pitchers, bottles and bowls; Webb and Frankel 1999: 8–12). Subsequent settlement excavations at Marki have shown that no distinction can be made between potentially elite activities of Philia pottery use (e.g. a mortuary event) and day-to-day, non-elite ones (Webb and Frankel 2007: 201). Mortuary events, however, appear to have been a focus for alcohol consumption rather than eating (Webb and Frankel 2008: 289).

Early Bronze I–II

The high firing and monochrome dark burnish and polish that characterises Late Chalcolithic and Philia assemblages

in Cyprus has a long tradition in Anatolia beginning in the Late Neolithic/Early Chalcolithic (e.g. in Cilicia, Mersin-Yumuktepe Levels XXIX–XXVI; Balossi 2004: 137–39). Similar techniques and surfaces are observed in Late Chalcolithic assemblages from the southern (e.g. Kuruçay Levels 6–3; Duru 1996: 121) and southwestern regions (e.g. Beycesultan Levels XXXIX–XX; Lloyd and Mellaart 1962: 71–103). In all regions across Anatolia, dark burnished and/or polished traditions continued into the EBA.

The innovations that distinguish EB I–II assemblages from earlier traditions include greater experimentation with forms and plastic decoration, an evocation of metallic shapes and surfaces (Lloyd and Mellaart 1962: 117) and unprecedented concern for the presentation and pouring of liquids. The latter is manifested in a wide range of new pitcher forms, including those that inspired the Philia pitchers (see Figure 8.2).

Nevertheless, Mellink (1991: 173) first noted that Philia pitchers are not exact replicates of known Anatolian forms. Variations between Cypriot and Anatolian forms, however, are comparable to variations between examples from different EB I–II sites and regions across Anatolia (Figure 8.2) (see also Efe 2003: fig. 5). Late Chalcolithic and Philia pottery traditions in Cyprus fit within a mosaic of broadly similar albeit localised ceramic traditions that should include western and southern Anatolia during EB I–II.

Settlement contexts for the consumption of food and drink are better illustrated in EB I–II Anatolian domestic assemblages than in Philia ones. A glance at a few swiftly destroyed buildings in western Anatolia shows these kinds of elaborated vessels *in situ*, together with a remarkable density and diversity of vessels related to the storage, preparation and consumption of food, normally associated with hearths (Figure 8.3).

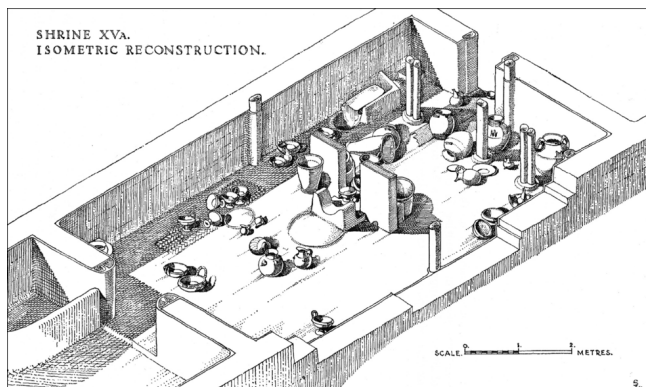


Figure 8.3. Reconstruction of *in situ* pottery sealed in the destruction of an EB I–II building at Beycesultan, after Lloyd and Mellaart (1962: fig. 16). Courtesy, British Institute at Ankara.

Hospitality that included the preparation and presentation of food and drink on a relatively large scale in elaborated or otherwise attractive vessels was of premium importance for EB I–II communities, and was likely related to increasingly robust grain storage strategies (see below) and commensurate investments of agricultural surplus. Perhaps this new concern for hospitality also relates to an EB I–II horticultural innovation: the first cultivation of the grape vine. The earliest seeds of *vitis vinifera* in Anatolia have been preserved in EB I–II botanical assemblages from Level XV at Beycesultan (Lloyd and Mellaart 1962: 45), and EB I–II levels at Kaman Kalehöyük (Fairbairn 2002: 205).

Transition to EB III

Concern for hospitality culminated in EB III, manifesting itself in the homogenisation of ceramic tastes across Anatolia that included the popularity of specific kinds of forms. EB III is marked by the rapid uptake of a wheelmade, normally red-slipped repertoire dominated by plates, platters and one- and two-handled tankards – including the emblematic *depas* cup. This type of vessel is known from the Greek mainland and Thrace across the length of Anatolia to the upper Euphrates. The red-slipped ware assemblages excavated

from the citadels of Troy II–III, Levels 12–11 at Kültepe in Cappadocia and EB III Tarsus in Cilicia are notable examples (e.g. Özgüç 1986; Mellink 1989). The late EB I–II origins of this repertoire have been placed convincingly in the region of Eskişehir (Efe and İlaslı 1997; this region is highlighted as a rectangle in Figure 8.1a, above).

The large diameters of the platters and the double handles of tankards are both EB III pottery innovations and may point to a greater emphasis on sharing table wares in feasting contexts (e.g. double handles would have facilitated passing the goblet; large plates would have been shared at the table; Eslick 2009: 234–45). Greater formality might also be observed in the intentional deposition of the red-slipped repertoire in Troy II contexts (Bachhuber 2009: 2–6), with objects like celts, toggle pins, metal vessels and carbonised faunal and organic matter. The most striking disconnection between the third millennium BC in Cyprus and the Anatolian peninsula is the total absence of any representative pottery form from the EB III repertoire (Mellink 1991: 173).

The Production, Exchange and Consumption of Metal

Philia Significance

Metallurgical innovations are a fundamental aspect of the newness of Philia material culture. Tomb assemblages of early excavations on Prehistoric Bronze Age (PreBA) Cypriot sites revealed unprecedented volumes of metal deposited in burials (mostly from northern Cyprus), in a wide range of new forms of purportedly Anatolian inspiration – including toggle pins, spiral ‘earrings’, and blades with a raised mid-rib (for an overview of objects, see Webb and Frankel 1999: 31–33; 2007: 199; for recent discussion of production and use of metal objects throughout the PreBA of Cyprus, see Knapp 2008: 74–87; 2013: 298–303). Several spiral ‘earrings’ from tomb assemblages at Sotira *Kaminoudhia*, as well as three Philia tin-bronze objects likely to have come

from Vasilia, represent the earliest tin-bronze objects in Cyprus (Swiny 2003: 376–90; Webb *et al.* 2006).

Focus on the production, exchange and consumption of metal has opened additional approaches to understanding the Philia phenomenon and its relationship with Anatolia. By the middle of the third millennium BC, communities in Cyprus were engaging with metal in innovative ways. Settlements like Marki were founded in previously uninhabited areas of the Troodos foothills, reasonably close to copper ores. The new concern to mobilise finished metal may be glimpsed in the axe/ingot mould identified in the earliest Philia settlement at Marki, which finds good comparanda in metal objects from Philia tomb assemblages (Frankel and Webb 2001: 35–36; 2006: 216–17).

Intensifying production and exchange of metal was both a cause and effect of increasing social complexity on Cyprus. For example, Keswani (2005: 391) has suggested that a relationship emerged between inland settlements such as Marki that mined metal, and communities in regions such as the north coast of Cyprus that benefited from its display and consumption, e.g. in the large, Philia-phase cemetery at Vasilia. The competitive desire to deposit or otherwise destroy metal in mortuary displays in these northern coastal communities may have been a crucial stimulus for the production of metal from the Troodos sources. The public consumption of metallurgical wealth in extramural cemeteries is also a salient feature of EB I–II societies across western and southern Anatolia (see below), a factor that joins the north of Cyprus and these regions in a meaningful *koiné* where status and resources such as metal were negotiated during public events in extramural cemeteries.

The *koiné* requires an explanation, particularly in light of innovations on Cyprus. One approach explores the relationship between metallurgy and the movement of populations to Cyprus. By the middle of the third millennium BC, Cyprus was probably incorporated in a network of (seaborne) metal circulation with Anatolia, the Aegean and perhaps the Levant (Şahoğlu 2005; Webb *et al.* 2006). From this perspective, information flows between

Cyprus and Anatolia are thought to have been established initially by Anatolian agents who visited Cyprus to procure copper (Mellink 1991: 173; Webb and Frankel 2007: 198; cf. Knapp 2013: 271–72), followed by a ‘leapfrogging’ of ethnically distinct Anatolian migrants to Cyprus along these paths of information and metals’ flow (Frankel *et al.* 1996: 49). The initial communication of Anatolianising ceramic technology to Cyprus during the Late Chalcolithic (early EB I–II Anatolia; see above, Table 8.1) might be explained by these intermittent contacts (Peltenburg 2007). Such a reconstruction also moves the impetus for migration away from the cultural-historical events caused by invasions of Indo-Europeans towards a more socially oriented development related to the exploitation of metal. Metal prospection is nevertheless debatable as an initial impetus for visits to Cyprus, not least because the tectonic landscapes of Anatolia are filled with copper ores (as well as silver and gold ores; de Jesus 1980). Metal flow between Anatolia and Cyprus was probably more of an effect than a cause of social change (see further below).

Early Bronze I–II

In the past two decades, research on metallurgical production has eclipsed typological studies of metal objects in the archaeology of EBA Anatolia. The most evocative metallurgical research to date focuses on the EB I–II Kestel mine and its associated mining settlement of Göltepe, 2 km distant in the central Taurus north of Cilicia (Figure 8.1a). In its earliest phases (IV–III), Göltepe was architecturally insubstantial, with wattle and daub superstructures covering ovoid floors cut into bedrock (Yener 1994: 33). The floors of all these structures were littered with industrial metallurgical debris, including clear evidence for a workshop in one of the structures with a stone-covered crucible, ground-stone ore crushers and kilos of ore powder and ore nodules. Additional structures were littered with moulds (including a mould for bar-shaped ingots; Yener and Vandiver 1993: 221), crucible fragments and ore powder.

In Phase II, Göltepe underwent an architectural

transformation, although industrial activities continued. Construction was on a larger and more permanent scale, with stone foundation buildings similar to a megaron in form, terracing to accommodate the expansion of the settlement and the construction of the larger buildings, and the erection of an enclosure wall with a gated entrance leading onto a street through the settlement (Yener 1994: 34–36). The floors of the buildings were scattered with mortars and grinders, kilos of powdered ore and crucible fragments. A lead ingot and silver-tin alloyed beads were also recovered from the floors (Yener 1994: 34).

The material investment in the settlement during Phase II was likely related to the increased demand for metal in a period of intensifying inter-regional communication, visible in the identification of Syrian-inspired bottle forms (Yener 1995: 180, pl. 3A), and in the ingot and ingot moulds noted above. The construction of the enclosure wall is the most striking architectural feature of Phase II, intimating concerns with restriction and perhaps defense in this isolated mining community. Perhaps the monumentality is related to a more economically and politically dependent relationship between Göltepe/Kestel and an emerging EB I–II regional centre, such as neighbouring EB II Tarsus, which has revealed so many pottery comparanda with Göltepe (see above, Figure 8.1a) (Yener and Vandiver 1993: 216–22). Göltepe and Kestel were abandoned in the transition to EB III. EB II Tarsus was also violently destroyed, and rebuilt in EB III, when its pottery repertoire was dominated by the wheelmade, red-slipped types discussed above (Goldman 1956: 61).

The existence of a specialised mining community at EB I–II Göltepe/Kestel may highlight regional production hierarchies in and around Cilicia. For example, no slag and not a single crucible or mould was identified at EB I–II Tarsus. This accords with Yalçın's (2000: 26) suggestion that regional production centres emerged in the EBA. This situation can be distinguished from production during the Chalcolithic, when ores were transported over distances and worked in settlements. During the EBA, it would seem that ores were smelted at sites such as Göltepe, and metal was

circulated to consumers in a more finished ingot form.

This neat picture is complicated by additional evidence for metallurgical production in western Anatolia. The identification of slag, for example, in contexts with crucibles and/or moulds at EB I-II Limantepe (Erkanal 2008a: 180), Bakla Tepe (Erkanal 2008b: 168), Çukuriçi Höyük (Horejs 2009) and EB III Troy (Müller-Karpe 1994: 46–49) illustrates initial stages of metallurgical production in settlements that were not directly associated with mining. Whether or not divergent production strategies and hierarchies existed between the regions of Cilicia and western Anatolia is difficult to discern until better evidence for EBA mining and mining communities is identified in the west (see Pernicka *et al.* 2003 for surveys in western Anatolia that have located EBA mining activities but no specialised mining settlements).

During EB I-II, societies across Anatolia were experimenting with ‘polymetallicism and polychromatic effects’ (Yener 2000: 68). The least innovative alloys during EB I-II were copper–arsenic ones that regularly appear in the fourth millennium (e.g. Begmann *et al.* 1994). Copper–arsenic alloys are also the most frequent metal types in the assemblages of EBA Anatolia (de Jesus 1980: cat. A). Arsenic-alloyed copper was attractive both for its greater mechanical strength and for its silvery sheen when compared with unalloyed copper (Yener 2000: 68). Arsenic often occurs in copper ores; whether arsenic was alloyed separately with copper, or was mined as a ready-made alloy, is still debated (Begmann *et al.* 1994: 204).

Tin began to be widely used as an alloy in Anatolia in EB I-II;¹ unlike arsenic, however, tin does not occur as a ready-made alloying agent in copper ores. It has also been observed that tin does not provide more mechanical strength or malleability to copper than arsenic (e.g. de Jesus 1980: 58–59). The choice to alloy copper with tin had other motivations, including colouring copper with distinctive reddish to golden hues (Yener 2000: 68). Tin need not have been imported from central Asia or some other distant place during this period. In addition to the trace elements of

cassiterite (a source of tin) identified in the EB I–II Kestel mines and in crucibles from Göltepe (Yener and Vandiver 1993), sources of tin in Turkey have been identified in geological prospection and described in historical accounts of tin mining in Turkey (de Jesus 1980: 51–56).

The new emphasis on metal during EB I–II Anatolia speaks to increased metal circulation in this period. Another EB I–II innovation facilitated metal flow: standardised ingot forms. A lead ingot and ingot moulds have been identified at Göltepe (as above), and ingot moulds have been recovered from Liman Tepe (Erkanal 2008a: 180), Bakla Tepe (Erkanal 2008b: 168) and Cukiriçi Höyük (Horejs 2009: 364–65). A related innovation of the EB I–II period involves the earliest use of metrological devices, including pan balance weights (Cukiriçi Höyük – Horejs 2009: 365–66; Troy I – Bobokyan 2009: 29) and balance beams (Troy I, EB II Külliüoba and Bözüyük – Rahmstorf 2006). Beginning in EB I–II, finished metal circulated in standardised ingot forms and was being weighed and exchanged with increasingly standardised values (for metrology, see Rahmstorf 2006; Bobokhyan 2009). Metal objects had thus acquired new significance as objects for display. This is also illustrated in the large volumes of metal consumed in EB I–II mortuary contexts in southern and western Anatolia, such as the Sariket Cemetery at Demircihöyük to the far north of western Anatolia (see above, Figure 8.1a) (Seeher 2000), or in the cemeteries at Karataş to the far south (Bordaz 1978).

The Sariket cemetery was founded late in the EB I–II settlement at Demircihöyük (Phase K, see Table 8.1, above), and raises one of two possibilities. Either the Demircihöyük community used different cemeteries in the earlier phases that have yet to be identified, or this mortuary behaviour was innovative to Demircihöyük in Phase K. If the Sariket cemetery was indeed innovative, it is worth considering a profound social reorientation in this community. Chapman (1990: 83–87) has addressed a similar problem in the earliest contexts of metal deposition in the eastern Balkans (fifth-millennium BC cemetery at Varna). He suggests that the earliest use and circulation of gold and copper were

potentially disruptive to the egalitarian (village) societies living on tells. New opportunities were created for social groups involved in the production and exchange of copper and gold that could not be reconciled with daily life. A new arena – a mortuary one – was created in the eastern Balkans for conspicuously consuming gold and copper in self-aggrandising gestures of display.

Perhaps these new conceptions of wealth and power – rooted in the expansion of metallurgical, agricultural and pastoral industries – were disruptive to village societies like EB I–II Demircihöyük (see below, and [Figure 8.4](#)), which then attempted to resolve these contradictions in the mortuary arena of the Sariket cemetery, some 370 m distant from the settlement. The metallurgical wealth consumed in several contemporary and large extramural cemeteries in EB I–II western Anatolia, such as Karataş in Lycia ([Bordaz 1978](#)), Göndürle Höyük in the Lakes District ([Özsait 2003](#)), or Bakla Tepe near İzmir ([Erkanal 2008b](#): 166–68) might be similarly interpreted, as well as the extramural cemeteries in contemporary northern Cyprus (noted above). The similarities in mortuary behaviour between the two regions are not fortuitous, and I offer an interpretation of them below.

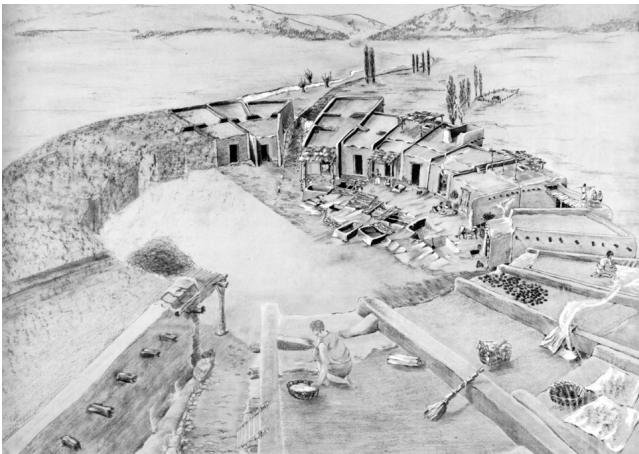


Figure 8.4. Reconstruction of a later phase of the Demircihöyük settlement, from [Korfmann \(1983: fig. 345\)](#). Courtesy, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Istanbul.

Transition to EB III

The best known sites from EBA Anatolia are also those where the largest volumes of metal objects were discovered: the 'royal tombs' at Period III Alacahöyük and the treasure deposits on the Late Troy II–III citadel (EB III). Emergent elites chose to invest remarkable volumes of metal objects and other valued materials in depositional contexts – one defined by a cemetery and attendant associations with ancestors (Alacahöyük – Bachhuber 2011), and the other by an ideologically charged citadel context (Troy – Bachhuber 2009). The negotiation of both status and resources through the conspicuous deposition/destruction of metallurgical wealth in cemeteries was already widely practiced during EB I–II, but the scale of this behaviour and the kinds of objects deposited at Troy and Alacahöyük were unprecedented in western and central Anatolia. Extravagant investments of metal objects in EB III citadel contexts can also be observed at Eskiypar near Alacahöyük (Özgüç and Temizer 1993) and at Poliochni in the northeast Aegean (Bernabò-Brea 1964: 284–92).

The elaboration of metal objects in EB III assemblages represents some of the most exquisitely crafted and semiotically potent metal forms from the Bronze Age in western Asia and the eastern Mediterranean. Decoration in repoussé, filigree, granulation, joining through soldering and lost wax casting reached a pinnacle of sophistication in EB III (Yalçın 2000: 26; Yener 2000: 67–68). Innovative alloying is another feature of these assemblages. Greater percentages of tin were invested in metal objects (Esin 1969: 121–46), and there was freer experimentation with alloys and polychromatic effects. Metal objects from contexts such as the late Troy II–III treasures and a hoard at Mahmatlar in north central Anatolia include zinc and silver alloys (Yener 2000: 68). Metal objects from mortuary assemblages at Resuloğlu in north central Anatolia include alloys of three metals (silver, copper and gold) and silver and copper (Zimmermann and Yıldırım 2008), the latter blend also observed in metal objects from the royal tombs of Alacahöyük (Yener 2000: 68).

The context of metallurgical production is less well understood during EB III. A single *in situ* workshop might be interpreted from Blegen's excavations, in House 300 of Troy III (Blegen *et al.* 1950). While Blegen did not himself reconstruct a metallurgical workshop here, Müller-Karpe (1994: 46–49, fig. 25) noted the three hearths, an ingot mould and a pair of tuyères recovered from House 300, as well as slag dumped onto a street adjacent to this building. Moulds for various kinds of jewellery, weapon and ingot forms have been identified without good (workshop) context at EB III levels from Troy (Müller-Karpe 1994) and at EB III Tarsus (Goldman 1956: 304–306).

The greater mobility of metal can be observed in the use and distribution of several categories of objects. A greater frequency of pan balance weight assemblages (Rahmstorf 2006; Bobokhyan 2009), and ingots and related forms,² have been identified in EB III contexts across the peninsula as far as eastern Turkey. Several studies have highlighted the distributions of closed vessel forms such as Syrian-inspired bottles from the Euphrates to the Aegean, to mark the routes through which metal was being circulated (Şahoğlu 2005; Rahmstorf 2006; Efe 2007).

The lapis lazuli deposited in the Trojan treasures points to a vast inter-regional network in the latter half of the third millennium (see Webb *et al.* 2006 for Cypriot involvement), which may have circulated central Asian tin through the urban centres of northern Syria to Anatolia (Korfmann 2001: 361). If, as suggested above, tin was mined in Anatolia during the EB I–II periods, it is worth considering whether colour distinctions were made between the locally produced alloys and alloys with imported tin. In either scenario, Anatolian mines were one possible source for the tin that has been identified in bronzes on Cyprus from this period (e.g. the spiral earrings from Sotira *Kaminoudhia* noted above).

Secondary Products Industries and Economies

Philia Significance

Sherratt's (1997) 'Secondary Products Revolution' has featured in several studies that reconstruct the autonomous emergence of Philia social complexity in Cyprus (originally Knapp 1990). Fundamental changes are observed in cattle husbandry and related developments in plough agriculture. Philia communities reintroduced cattle to Cyprus after a gap in the known presence of cattle on the island for at least 4000 years (Croft 2003: 274–75). Cull-patterns from the Philia phase at Marki Alonia show that cattle were kept well into maturity. The identification of a few robust cattle phalanges from this phase suggests (albeit tentatively) that these animals were being used for draught (Croft 2006: 271).

The intensification of agricultural production as one consequence of the introduction of the plough in Philia communities is frequently cited (Knapp 1990; 2008: 119–21; Manning 1993; Frankel 2000), although the extent to which agriculture was transformed from the pre-cattle Late Chalcolithic is not that clear (Peltenburg 1996: 21–22). For the moment, there is more and better evidence for the centralised storage of agricultural surplus at Late Chalcolithic Kissonerga *Mosphilia* (in the 'Pithos House'; Peltenburg *et al.* 1998: 252–55) than there is at Philia–Early Cypriot Marki Alonia (Frankel and Webb 2006: 101). There, storage became increasingly 'privatised' through time.

Metal objects have been cited as indirect evidence for the transformation of agricultural strategies from the Late Chalcolithic to the EBA. Land clearance strategies have been observed in the frequency of axe forms in Philia tomb assemblages (Knapp 1990: 157; 2008: 78–79), and agricultural surpluses may have supported the existence of specialised (metallurgical) craftsmen (Manning 1993: 48–49). The evidence for a revolution in farming practice in the transition from the Late Chalcolithic to the EBA is not overwhelming, although developments will likely become clearer with future excavations of both Late Chalcolithic and Philia-phase settlements. A better-illustrated transformation

is that in the textile industries of the Philia phase. The earliest known loomweights thus far known in Cyprus come from the Philia level at Marki *Alonia* (Crewe 1998: 32–38; Frankel and Webb 2006: 159–77). Prior to the EBA, there is no evidence for the warp-weighted loom, though at least one spindle whorl has been identified at Late Chalcolithic Kissonerga *Mosphilia* (Peltenburg *et al.* 1998: 199).

The implements for spinning and weaving linen versus wool are generally considered indistinguishable in the archaeological record (Obladen-Kauder 1996: 244–45; McCorriston 1997: 521–22). Size and weight variations of spindle whorls, however, have been used to distinguish between linen and wool manufacture on prehistoric Cyprus (Crewe 1998: 32); larger whorls that would have been more appropriate for linen all postdate the Philia phase (Lindy Crewe, pers. comm., January 2011). Nevertheless, the possibility of wool manufacture should be considered at Marki *Alonia* (Frankel and Webb 1996: 194–95). New textile technology during the Philia phase may have been related to the new exploitation of wool, although *ovis* faunal assemblages of the EBA do not show a strong tendency towards secondary products (Croft 2006: 263–71). The metal toggle might support the existence of woollen industries in at least some Philia communities. Sherratt (1997: 181) has noted that the fastening pin is suitable only for the loose weave of woollen textiles.

The significance of textile industries for the Philia phase has generally not entered into processual studies that have explored the utility of the ‘Secondary Products Revolution’. This is probably due to the minimal evidence for textile industries prior to the publication of the settlement at Marki, and to the limited evidence for manufacturing wool. Textile industries have been more prominent in the recent migration-oriented studies (e.g. Frankel 2000: 172–73). The use of the low-whorl spindle that characterises both EBA Anatolian and Philia-phase spinning practices is understood to be a specific motor skill: ‘[spindle whorls] highlight aspects of enculturation and learned techniques typical of one society as opposed to another’ (Frankel 2000: 172).

Textile production has been described as a ‘domestic technology’ with skill sets that could only be passed on in domestic contexts with strong intimations of female-gendered, non-elite activities (Webb and Frankel 2007: 201–203). It is nevertheless worth considering that textiles (and related technologies) circulated with metal in elite and probably male-dominated networks of commodities exchange in Western Asia during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages.³

Early Bronze I–II

Cattle were clearly invested with ideological significance in EBA Anatolia, as demonstrated in the royal tombs of Alacahöyük with their ‘steer figurines’ and normally paired presentation of cattle skulls and hooves (see recently Mansfeld 2001; for cattle processions, see Zimmermann 2009). From EB I–II western Anatolia, similar behaviour is observed in the sacrifice and presentation of intact paired cattle near seven cist burials in the extramural Sariket Cemetery of the Demircihöyük settlement (Seeher 2000: 30–32). The recurring pairs of cattle at both sites point to the use of cattle for traction in these societies.

The relationship between traction and the intensification of agricultural production is linear at Demircihöyük. The founding of the Sariket cemetery (including the practice of cattle sacrifice) in Phase K was late in the site’s stratigraphic sequence (Table 8.1). The granaries that clutter the central open area of the settlement from Phases F to P (Figure 8.4) did not exist in the earliest architectural levels (Korfmann 1983: 218–19). Granaries and lined storage bins also feature in the contemporary, neighbouring settlement of EB II Külliüoba (in Complex II; Efe and Fidan 2008: 71–75) and at EB I and EB II Tarsus in Cilicia (Goldman 1956: 11–12, 19, 27).

Two significant developments occurred in the EB I–II village at Demircihöyük after the settlement of that period had been founded: (1) new agricultural strategies that required the construction of granaries, and (2) the creation of a mortuary arena to consume metallurgical wealth and

other valuable resources, such as cattle, in public events. Textile industries can also be reconstructed at EB I-II Demircihöyük in exceptional detail. Settlement destructions in Phase E1 and H preserved warp-weighted loom contexts (for Phase E1, see Korfmann 1983: 33–34; for Phase H, see Korfmann 1983: 114) in buildings that also preserved conspicuous evidence for the storage, presentation and consumption of food. These buildings belonged to socially and economically important households in the village, where the organisation of textile industries culminated in the weaving of the cloth, and the organisation of agricultural industries culminated in feasting activities. *In situ* looms have also been identified in contexts with remarkable concentrations of cooking and tableware pottery on the late Troy II–III citadel (Late Ilg Room 206; Blegen *et al.* 1950: 351) and at contemporary Aphrodisias (Complex II; Kadish 1971: 136–38).

Obladen-Kauder (1996: 226) argues convincingly for the manufacture of predominantly woollen textiles at Demircihöyük. Although the archaeobotany of the site has yet to be published comprehensively, not a single example of linseed, which would suggest the cultivation of flax, has been identified. The much more extensive and better-published archaeobotanical record from Troy supports her observation. Textiles at EBA Troy were clearly an expansive industry (see below), yet flax has not been preserved in the archaeobotanical assemblages (Riehl 1999: 104).

The published faunal assemblages from Demircihöyük lend further support to the existence of a woollen textile industry. *Ovis* and *caprid* kill-off patterns show that more than 50% lived to maturity (von den Driesch and Boessneck 1987: 62), suggesting these were managed for their secondary products. The herding of woolly sheep can be inferred from the existence of two *ovis* species in the EBA faunal assemblages that show a meaningful chronological pattern. In the earlier phases, a smaller, hairy species of *ovis* is more frequent, whilst in the later phases, a clear shift is observed in the predominance of a larger species that may have been wool-bearing (von den Driesch and Boessneck 1987: 60). The

scale and complexity of herd-management strategies necessarily increase when one species is bred for meat protein and another for wool, particularly when the latter is kept alive for longer durations than the former. Land requirements for pasturage are thus greater when wool is a primary textile fibre (as compared with flax for linen; McCorriston 1997: 523–24).

Transition to EB III

The intensification of agricultural industry in EB III is well illustrated in the increased scale of agricultural storage at both Troy II–III and EB III Tarsus. Heinrich Schliemann recorded a context that he called a ‘wine merchant’s cellar’ sealed in the destruction of the Third Burnt City (Schliemann 1880: 379, nos. 8, 344), dated to late Troy II–III (S. Ünlüsoy, pers. comm.). The storage facility included nine upright *pithoi*, each larger than a person. Similarly at EB III Tarsus, grain ‘silos’ surpass in size and volume the bins and granaries from the EB I and EB II settlements (Goldman 1956: 39).

Textile industries also underwent a dramatic transformation. The excavations of Schliemann and Blegen produced 8000+ spindle whorls, mostly from Troy II–III contexts (Blegen 1963: 88), clearly too many to be explained by spinning activities alone (S. Blum, pers. comm.). These numbers should nevertheless be related to an intensification of textile production and exchange. Bobokhyan (2009: 41) considers the spindle whorl to have functioned as a kind of token at Troy, highlighting the close proximal association between pan balance weights and spindle whorls at Troy II–II. In this scenario, the former were used for measuring the weight of metal to validate transactions, and the latter may have been used as a token related to the accountancy and/or exchange of textiles.

The intensification of textile industries at Troy II–III should be considered in light of the broadest developments in western Anatolia, if we accept that the expansion occurred in wool more than in linen. One consequence may have been

ever-increasing demands on land resources in the ‘extensification’ of the pastoral industry (after Halstead 1992; McCorriston 1997), with potential for conflict between neighbouring communities and aggressive strategies of land consolidation.

James Mellaart, Anatolia and Cyprus

The Bronze Age in Anatolia has attracted little processual (let alone postprocessual) research, and consequently Mellaart’s Indo-European cultural-historical explanation of social change in EBA Anatolia has been left to decay. It has either been ignored by subsequent generations of archaeologists working in Bronze Age Anatolia who do not share his macro-vision to interpret social change, or replaced by the potential of long-distance trade to explain social change (e.g. Şahoğlu 2005; Efe 2007; Sarı 2012). It is time to rethink the EBA on the Anatolian peninsula and its relationship with Cyprus.

I began this chapter considering dynamics in the landscape that may account for the instability observed in the EB I–II to EB III transition. By the end of EB I–II, most of the alluvia of Anatolia were more crowded with settlement than in any other period in prehistory or protohistory (see above, Figure 8.1b and Table 8.2). These communities did not co-exist in harmony. The frequent destruction of settlements, the fortifications observed around many excavated settlements, the high social value placed on weapons deposited in mortuary contexts, and wounds exhibited on burials in EB I–II cemeteries (for blunt force skull fractures at Demircihöyük-Sariket, see Wittwer-Backofen 2000: 267, 269) all show a clear tendency to violence.

More geomorphological and palynological data are needed before anthropogenic impacts on third millennium BC Anatolian landscapes can be confidently reconstructed, although such studies appear to show a relationship between alluviation and deforestation. Anthropogenic impact on landscapes can be inferred from a range of activities that I have noted in EBA societies, in particular plough-based

agricultural intensification coupled with the proposed expansion of woollen textile industries. Demands were also placed on timber for fuel. Metal objects underpinned display/sumptuary codes as well as exchange activities, and so EBA communities invested increasing volumes of timber in metallurgical industries. The production of highly fired (metallicising) ceramic fine wares was another fuel-intensive industry that might have also taken a toll.

Erosional instability in the landscape and social instability between increasingly crowded settlements may have been two consequences of the expanding economies and industries of EB I–II Anatolia. In the transition to EB III, there was a dramatic decrease in the number of settlements, related to the emergence of regional centres that absorbed or dispersed populations. Settlement data from the Troad and the excavations at Troy graphically illustrate this trend. More than 30 EB I–II (Troy I) sites have been identified in the Troad; during EB III (Troy II–III), there was only one.

The fortifications and Megara-like structures of Troy II that monumentalise to stunning effect were related to the sociopolitical and economic consolidation of the Troad (Bachhuber 2009: 6–9, 13–14). Similar kinds of monumentality are observed on EB III citadels at Level KG 3 Kanlıgeçit in Turkish Thrace (Özdoğan and Özdoğan 2006: fig. 1), Kültepe Level 11 (Özgüç 1986: pls III.3–1, III.3–2), and EB III Tarsus (Goldman 1956: pls 11–13). This move towards centralisation and consolidation had already begun in late EB I–II, with monumental buildings separated from extramural buildings by fortifications at EB I–II Liman Tepe (Erkanal 2008a: 182, figs 3, 7, 8) and Külliüoba (Efe and Fıdan 2008; see also monumental central buildings in the fortified settlement of late EB I–II Bademağacı – Duru and Umurtak 2009: 16, plan 1). To what extent developments on the Anatolian peninsula during the third millennium BC can be characterised as ‘urbanisation’ has been carefully critiqued (Çevik 2007).

Metallurgy and wool were probably the most consequential industries for the elites who ruled Troy II–III and other EB III regional centres. Both industries were

inherently expansive (or 'extensive', following Halstead 1992: 109, 112–16), as the desire for metal objects necessitated access to highland or otherwise distant sources of metals, and a wool industry required greater tracks of land for pasturage. Both industries were labour intensive, particularly when metal objects and textiles were refined with exquisite craftsmanship. Metal objects and garments could absorb the added value of labour (Sherratt and Sherratt 1991: 359), which included investments of agricultural surplus to support the specialists who manufactured them. Metal and textiles were thus easily mobilised as low-bulk, high-value commodities in exchange networks. Similarly, both metal and textiles met the needs for increasingly conspicuous display.

The emergence of regional centres and regional elites across EBA western Anatolia and the related widespread abandonment of settlements during EB III should be considered in light of these requirements of resources and labour, and the potential benefits of both industries for select groups of people. By Troy II–III at the latest, metal and textiles were produced for surplus, and mobilised as convertible commodities in elite networks where one could be exchanged for (or valued against) the other. In this way, the elite demand for metal and woven fineries joined emergent regional centres to one another across arteries that were no longer encumbered by small farming villages. The social groups who ruled these emergent centres developed shared sumptuary codes and codes of personal display, in part through participation in socially charged events in citadel contexts in or near buildings such as the Central Megaron Complex of Troy II or the similarly impressive and contemporary hearth-furnished building from Level 11 at Kültepe (Özgüç 1986: pls III.3–1 and III.3–2). Events on the two citadels would have included similar kinds of feasting and the negotiation of similar kinds of status and resources (for Troy, see Bachhuber 2009).

EBA communities in Cyprus appear to have had little to do with the Anatolian EB III regional centres. Cypriot isolation (at least from Anatolia) occurred during the most

communicative, intensive and homogenising period across the peninsula. The Cypriot disconnect from EB III Anatolia begs for an explanation, which requires diminishing the role of long-distance (metal) exchange to explain the Anatolianising aspects of Philia material culture.

I hope to be able to demonstrate the potential for both increased mobility and instability in EBA Anatolia. Mobility included the ‘invisible flows’ (Sherratt 1997: 373) of tangibles such as metal and textiles or intangibles such as information. Instability is observed in an initial stage of rapid crowding during EB I–II that strained both resources and inter-community relations, followed by a profound break in EB III that included the abandonment of most EB I–II farming villages. It is within these contexts of mobility and instability that it is worth revisiting Anthony (1997: 23–25) and others who have re-engaged migrations with the archaeological record.

Discussion

Why would people have left the Anatolian peninsula to resettle in Cyprus? The farming communities of EB I–II Anatolia may well have been victims of their own success. Success can be observed in the intensification and extensification of agricultural, pastoral and metallurgical industries with immediate implications for demographic expansion and for anthropogenic impact on landscapes. Conditions may have become unfavourable for some communities in late EB I–II, and it is not unreasonable to reconstruct push factors (after Anthony 1997: 23–25) that may have uprooted some social groups already in this period. Migrants who may have begun arriving in Cyprus towards the end of EB I–II would have maintained social, ideological and exchange links with communities on the peninsula.

The mortuary *koiné* between EB I–II Anatolia and Philia-phase Cyprus perhaps best illustrates the relationship between the two regions. Secondary interments are pervasive in the large extramural cemeteries of both regions

(for Anatolia, see Bachhuber 2014; for Cyprus, see Keswani 2004: 45–46; but cf. Webb *et al.* [2009] who contest Keswani's views on secondary interment), and may highlight meaningful connections between the treatment of the corpse, veneration of ancestors and broader social relations (Keswani 2004: 13–18). In Cyprus, ancestral links with the past may have conjured up people and places that existed in an Anatolian past. An Anatolian past might have been revisited through the performance of (ancient) mortuary rites in Cyprus with appropriate kinds of material culture (e.g. the garments, jewellery and vessel forms that had been used for centuries in Anatolia).

Secondary interments also granted related social groups time, after the death of the deceased, to organise resources and participants towards a momentous mortuary event (Keswani 2004: 15). In this way, kinship ties with communities in Anatolia might also have been renewed through invitations to participate in mortuary events in Cyprus, at least early in the Philia phase (see below). These events would have also been occasions to negotiate resources between Cyprus and Anatolia through consoling gifts or otherwise, in particular the metal that was so conspicuously displayed and deposited in the cemeteries of both regions.

Differences in the mortuary rituals between the two regions are as meaningful as their similarities. The extramural cemeteries of EB I–II Anatolia were largely comprised of burials in *pithoi* (Stech-Wheeler 1974), whilst only two (intramural) *pithos* burials are known from the Philia phase in Cyprus (Marki, Kissonerga). Philia communities mostly interred their dead in pits and rock-cut chamber tombs (Keswani 2004: 39). To what extent time was a mediating factor in the differences between Philia and EB I–II mortuary practices remains to be investigated in settlement and cemetery excavations in the northern (occupied) part of Cyprus. Nevertheless, the range of subtle and not-so-subtle differences between Philia and EB I–II material culture represent a tension between an Anatolian past (revisited by the descendants of migrants) and a Cypriot

present, as new kinds of identities were being created through interaction with new social and physical environments (Webb and Frankel 1999: 43; 2013; Knapp 2008: 114–30).

I suggested that an initial migration towards Cyprus had already begun in the late EB I–II, when strong (kin-based) networks of communication and vivid social memory upheld close links with an Anatolian past. But the social scene in Anatolia changed dramatically by the transition to EB III. The transition from EB I–II to EB III likely involved a crisis suffered by many farming communities that were forced to abandon their settlements. It is worth considering if, how and where these populations resettled. I consider four possibilities:

- (1) The most archaeologically visible option: populations were absorbed in the societies and economies of the emergent EB III regional centres.
- (2) The least archaeologically visible option: populations who were already engaged in pastoral industries and economies in settlement contexts during EB I–II entered a more mobile kind of pastoralism in the transition to EB III.
- (3) The darkest option: populations diminished as the result of starvation and violence.
- (4) Migration: populations followed information flows towards places with similar landscapes (e.g. intermontane plains) that were not experiencing the turmoil of the alluvia in the Anatolian peninsula, and where similar kinds of economies and lifestyles might be pursued. This ultimately required boarding a boat.

Option 1 best fits the evidence for the transition from EB I–II to EB III in Anatolia while option 3 probably also happened. Option 4 is the most appropriate for understanding the Anatolian context of Philia material culture, which probably included some degree of the mobile social-economy observed for option 2.

It would nevertheless seem that most EB I–II farming

villages that may have maintained ties with Cyprus ceased to exist. New non-kin-based institutions ruled from citadels across the Anatolian peninsula (Bachhuber 2014). It is reasonable to expect that some populations fled this scene along paths of communication that were initiated and maintained by early migrants. Meaningful communication between Cyprus was all but severed, revealed by the total absence of EB III material culture in Cyprus (see above, [Table 8.1](#)). From this point in time, the Anatolian past had begun to recede and generational memory to fade. The diminishing of the Anatolian past and the encounter with the Cypriot present is one way to consider what Knapp (2008; 2013: 268–77) has described as the hybridisation of Philia material culture, to contrast with EC I–II when Anatolia may no longer have existed as an ancestral place for people living in Cyprus.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the British Institute at Ankara for supporting me in this research, in particular for the excellent and congenial work environment. Thanks to Bernard Knapp for inviting me to contribute to this volume and for his helpful comments on an early draft. Thanks also to Turan Efe and Lindy Crewe for their comments on the paper and for useful suggestions. Michele Massa granted me permission to cite soon-to-be-published material, and to use his soon-to-be-published maps ([Figure 8.1](#)). Discussions with Douglas Baird, Stephan Blum, Turan Efe, Christine Eslick, Barbara Horejs and Sinan Ünlüsoy were also helpful. Lastly thanks to Elizabeth Froom for reading over the manuscript.

der Osten 1937 vol. 2: 93, fig. 96; vol. 3: 338–39). Tin was also alloyed with silver in beads identified at EB I–II Göltepe (see above).

2 Troy III Treasures F for notched gold and electrum bar ingots (Antonova *et al.* 1996: cat. nos. 128–32); Treasure A for silver *Zungenbarren* (Schliemann 1880: nos. 787–92); see Bobokhyan (2007: 89–90) for discussion of ingots in the Trojan treasures; for silver plano-convex ingots in a roughly contemporary hoard at Mahmatlar in north central Anatolia (Koşay and Akok 1950). For moulds of ingots in EBA and MBA contexts across Anatolia, see Müller-Karpe (1994: 141).

3 For the clearest illustration in the Assyrian Trading Colony enterprise, see Veenhof (2008); for discussion of textiles production, exchange and consumption in EBA western Anatolia, see Bachhuber (2014).

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9 Bronze Age European Elites: From the Aegean to the Adriatic and Back Again

Michael L. Galaty, Helena Tomas and William A. Parkinson

Abstract

In their recent, influential book The Rise of Bronze Age Society (2005), Kristiansen and Larsson argued that hierarchical societies formed in Europe during the Bronze Age in response to the spread from the Near East to northern Europe of elite objects and symbols. These were adopted into and transmitted through existing European institutions following identifiable paths. One of these paths traversed the eastern Mediterranean, entering continental Europe via the Aegean and Adriatic seas. In this scenario, the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean states acted as nodes of communication and transfer, shipping ideas and items up the Adriatic coast and onward to central Europe. But there is good evidence that contacts between the Aegean and the eastern Adriatic were at their strongest prior to and immediately following, not during, the Mycenaean period. In order to disentangle the complex patterns of culture contact and transmission that characterized interactions between the eastern Mediterranean and Europe in the Bronze Age, we deploy various theoretical frameworks at different analytical scales. This effort reveals dynamic processes of change and transformation at the local and regional levels, which are helpful in understanding the continental patterns synthesized by Kristiansen and Larsson.

Introduction: *Ex Oriente Lux?*

The European Bronze Age was an exciting, dynamic time: things moved, and people moved too, occasionally, or so it seems. As a result, social, political, and economic institutions were transformed. Institutional change gave rise to new ways of thinking and being, such that hierarchical relationships between individuals and groups became acceptable and formalized.

The transformation of European society at the dawn of the Bronze Age was once thought to be a result of contact with southwestern Asia – the ‘East,’ the primary example of change *ex oriente lux* (e.g., Childe 1925). Trade, of metals in particular, was implicated heavily in the rise of European civilization (e.g., Piggott 1965). Those who controlled access to copper and tin and the production and circulation of bronze, it was assumed, directed the processes of change. Archaeologists later realized, however, that while control of scarce resources was certainly important to Bronze Age elites, access to new ideas was as significant and equally lucrative. Following Helms (1988; 1993; 1998), Bronze Age elites were thought to have monopolized sacred and symbolic knowledge, not to mention technological know-how, that others did not or could not share. Often this knowledge emanated from outside local systems or from outside the European continent itself. Exotic objects and ideas became sources of cultural capital, media mixed with messages, hybrid vehicles for a new social order.

Given the above, archaeologists were forced to (re)consider the nature of culture contact and change in Bronze Age Europe and in general (Parkinson and Galaty 2009). What motivated these very different societies to interact? What did people in the East want with Europeans, and *vice versa*? The contacts that did take place occurred, apparently, across wide expanses of space and over long periods of time, so how were they sustained? Convincing answers to these questions were found when concepts from world-systems theory (Wallerstein 1974) were coupled with notions of temporality derived from the *Annales* school

(Braudel 1966) and applied to Mediterranean archaeological data sets. The Mediterranean Sea and the rivers flowing into it were seen as a complex network supporting a world-system that developed over time and linked diverse cultures from the Near East to northern Europe, connecting center to periphery (Rowlands *et al.* 1987) (Figure 9.1). In world-systems terms, the eastern core states were thought to have extracted raw materials from the European periphery via semi-peripheral Mediterranean interlocutors, such as the Minoan and Mycenaean states, which received prestige goods and knowledge, as described above, in return (Sherratt 1994). Because elites living in each subsystem, in very different cultural contexts, interfaced with the larger system in very different ways, relationships between them developed in variable fashion, at different spatial and temporal scales (Knapp and Blake 2005). Exchange systems ran the gamut from independent and temporary to commercial and sustained (Galaty *et al.* 2009). Some exchanges were understood to be private and personal, made between individuals, whereas others were public affairs of state. In *Annales* terms, the former occurred at the chronological scale of *événements*, whereas the latter might create *conjonctures*, shaping regional histories across generations (Bintliff 1991; Knapp 1992). In both cases, the *mentalités*, of those living on the periphery in particular, were challenged and shaped.



Figure 9.1. Map of Mediterranean Europe with regions mentioned in the text. Produced by J. Seagard, The Field Museum, Chicago, for the authors.

The world-systems/*annaliste* model of European prehistory, however, did not go unquestioned. Many archaeologists wondered whether relationships of dependency between core and periphery, which seemed necessary to a functioning world-system, could have developed in prehistory (e.g., Stein 1999). Others thought that world-systems theory was, in fact, too inflexible, leaving too little room for human agency to be useful (e.g., Kohl 2008). In response, world-systems analysts have modified general world-systems theory so that it works in specific, noncapitalist prehistoric contexts (Kardulias 2009). Hall (1986; 1998a; 1998b; 2000; 2001), for example, has amended Wallerstein's concept of incorporation, the process whereby marginal societies are integrated into a world-system, such that the relationship between core and periphery is not always, or purely, one of dependency. In prehistoric times, when cores were separated from

peripheries by great, seemingly insurmountable, distances, individuals living in both zones likely met as equals, ‘brother to brother’ as it were, rather than sovereign to subject. Kardulias (2007a), citing examples from Cyprus and North America, calls this phenomenon ‘negotiated peripherality,’ whereby elites on the periphery dictated the terms of their own, often willing, incorporation into an encroaching world-system. These adjustments to world-systems theory follow much recent historical and archaeological scholarship on frontier societies, which reveals that frontiers were loci of active cultural production, and that materials and ideas flowed across borders in both directions, from core to periphery and *vice versa*, as well (e.g., Lightfoot and Martinez 1995; Parker and Rodseth 2005; Schon and Galaty 2006).

Bronze Age European Elites: A New Synthesis

Much of this new thinking on cultural interaction informs the work of Kristiansen and Larsson’s (2005) book *The Rise of Bronze Age Society*. For them, Bronze Age Europe was marked not by separation from the Mediterranean world-system, nor by any degree of dependency in its relationship to distant states. In their view, Europe and the Mediterranean together comprised a giant, networked whole, with permeable boundaries, across which individuals, warrior elites in particular, passed at will. There was a Bronze Age world-system, but Kristiansen and Larsson have decentered it, allowing Bronze Age Europeans to ‘negotiate’ their ‘peripherality’ in numerous, creative, ultimately transformative ways. And yet, in *The Rise of Bronze Age Society* culture change still, by and large, flows *ex oriente*. Arrows on maps point west and north. One wonders if these authors have returned whence Childe began (see Nordquist and Whittaker 2007; and cf. Kristiansen and Larsson 2007).

The Rise of Bronze Age Society is a work of *synthesis*, not *analysis*. We use these terms in their literal sense, the ‘putting together’ rather than ‘breaking apart’ of a system

into its constituent parts. As a work of synthesis, Kristiansen and Larsson's model of the European Bronze Age is inherently deductive; it encourages argument from the general to the particular. Since their primary goal, however, was to explain social interaction at the continental scale and over the long term, the model should not be expected to work perfectly in every region, in all localities, throughout Europe. Rather we should expect variation in regional and local patterns of interaction, and these can be used to refine the more general model (Parkinson and Galaty 2009; Yerkes *et al.* 2009). Our aim in this paper is not to pick apart Kristiansen and Larsson's synthesis by pointing out exceptions and inconsistencies, which are inherent in any work of synthesis. Instead, we take the opportunity to examine the various ways in which regional and local histories reacted to and were shaped by the macro-scalar patterns of interaction they describe. Specifically, we analyze archaeological data collected along a route of Bronze Age interaction that tied the Aegean to central Europe via the eastern Adriatic coast.

Bronze Age European Elites: A New Analysis

Despite recent emphasis on the Neolithic (e.g., Hodder 1990; Perlès 2001), no scholar familiar with the European Bronze Age would dispute that significant political, economic, and ideological changes occurred during the period. The more formative transformation occurred during the Bronze Age, creating the conditions necessary to the rise of the hierarchical proto-states of 'barbarian' Europe (Thurston 2009). Furthermore, there is little doubt that the Bronze Age transformation had something to do with more interaction across broader geographic areas, including southwest Asia, as compared to earlier periods. This increased interaction is indicated and probably also caused by the extensive trade in metals, but was also stimulated by other factors, such as the widespread adoption of the domestic horse and wheeled transport (Anthony 2007). What remains unclear is the extent to which changes in Bronze Age social complexity

were spurred by contacts with the Near East, and the means by which social concepts were transmitted across these large areas. Kristiansen and Larsson have built an explicit model that implicates a clear geographic tendency (east to west) and identifies mechanisms (the movement of objects, ideas, and individuals) for how this interaction occurred.

The tendency to envision interaction as primarily one way (east to west) and driven by exchange can be attributed to traditional archaeological models that relied almost exclusively on comparative, regional ceramic typologies. These were developed prior to the widespread use of absolute dating methods such as radiocarbon. Similarities between artifact types and assemblages were used as indicators of both chronology and interaction. Synchronicity was taken for granted, and the direction of interaction was assumed. Despite the impact of the radiocarbon revolution, several typological models that were developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century continue to exercise undue influence on thinking about how people interacted during prehistory.

Considered within an absolute chronological framework, and when regional and local data sets are brought to bear, the picture sketched by Kristiansen and Larsson begins to look very different (Table 9.1). The patterns that emerge at regional and local scales indicate strong links between the Aegean and the northeast Adriatic in the earlier Bronze Age, very weak links during the Mycenaean period, and a major shift at the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age, beginning in 1200 BC. They reaffirm the (relatively) new vision of European prehistory, Mediterranean prehistory in particular, sketched above, which emphasizes the scalar effects of interaction over shifting distances, across different lengths of time, and involving individuals embedded in and operating through very different sociopolitical structures (Parkinson and Galaty 2007).

Table 9.1. *Bronze Age Chronology for Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean (all dates are approximate and in*

calibrated years BC).

	Northern Europe^a	
Period IV/V	1040–760	
Period III	1440–1040	
Period II	1500–1250	
Period I	1730–1510	
Late Neolithic II	1920–1730	
	Central Europe^a	
Hallstatt B2/3	1050–750	
Hallstatt B1	1100–1000	
Hallstatt A	1250–1050	
Bronze D	1400–1200	
Tumulus Bronze	1500–1300	
Age (Bronze B–C)		
Bodman/	1950–1500	
Schachen, Zürich-		
Mozartstrasse		
(Bronze A2)		
Singen (Bronze	2200–1950	
A1)		
Bell Beaker/	3000–2000	
Cord Ware		
Copper Age	4500–3000	
	Eastern Adriatic and Central Balkans^b	
Late Bronze Age	1300–700	
Middle Bronze	1600–1300	
Age		
Early Bronze Age	2400/2200–1600	
Chalcolithic	3500–2400/2200	
	Crete^c	Mainland Greece^c
	<i>Minoan</i>	<i>Helladic</i>
Late Bronze III	1390–1070	1390–1070
	(Mycenaean)	(developed palaces)
Late Bronze I–II	1600–1390	1600–1390

	(Neopalatial)	
Middle	2100–1600	2000–1600
	(Protopalatial)	
Early	3100–2100	3100–2000
	(Prepalatial)	
Neolithic	6800–3100	7000–3100
	Egypt^d	
New Kingdom	1600–1100	
Middle Kngdom	2000–1600	
Old Kingdom	2300–2000	
Archaic	2800–2300	
Hierakonpolis	ca. 3000	
	(expansion and consolidation)	
Predynastic	3300–3000	
	(formative)	
Neolithic	5000–3300	
	Anatolia^e	
Hittite Empire	1400/1350–1180	
	(expansion and consolidation)	
Old Kingdom	1650/1600–1400/1350	
	(incorporation)	
Hattian	2000–1700	
Occupation	(formative, Assyrian trading colonies)	
Early Bronze Age	3000–2000	
Chalcolithic	5200–3000	
Neolithic	7000–5200	
	Syro-Palestine^e	
Late Bronze Age	1400–1200	
	(incorporation)	
Middle Bronze Age	2000–1400	
	(formative, Assyrian trading colonies)	
Early Bronze Age	3000–2000	
Chalcolithic	4200–3400	

^a Adapted from Harding 2000.

^b Adapted from Dimitrijević *et al.* 1998.

^c Adapted from Tartaron 2008.

^d Adapted from Savage 2001.

^e Wilkinson 2003; Bryce 2005.

Careful study of regional and local archaeological records, from Greece to Europe via the Adriatic, suggests that some aspects of Kristiansen and Larsson's model need to be refined. When their synthesis is analyzed, i.e., split into its constituent parts, the Mediterranean system of prehistoric interaction seems anything but unidirectional and static. Rather, change flowed in multiple directions at variable rates through time as a function of geography and human agency. During the earlier periods of the Bronze Age, for example, objects and ideas flowed south along the eastern Adriatic coast, influencing the rise of the Mycenaean states in multiple, important ways. This pattern was reestablished at the end of the Bronze Age, following the Mycenaean collapse. The Late Bronze Age collapse was not triggered by this process, but the disappearance of the Mycenaean states certainly opened up spaces – literally and figuratively, in the form of vacant territories and receptive minds – for northerners to reverse-‘colonize’ the Aegean. People may have moved, but even more importantly, new ideas were transferred south and Greek landscapes and *mentalités* were transformed.

The recent, modified version of world-systems theory described above (Kardulias 2009), highlighting ‘negotiated peripherality’ and cultural exchange and production in frontier zones, provides a useful interpretive context for our patterns. Yet, there are at least two additional theoretical strands that can be drawn into our analysis, lending further interpretive support. These are, broadly speaking, postcolonial theory (culture contact and hybridization practices in particular) and cultural transmission theory, both of which archaeologists have applied recently to prehistoric data sets.

In our region of study, colonies (i.e., *apoikiai*) did not become common until the late Iron Age, established by Greeks at places like Apollonia in central Albania during the seventh–sixth century BC (Stocker and Davis 2006), and Issa and Pharos (on the islands of Vis and Hvar respectively) in Dalmatia during the fourth century BC (Gaffney *et al.* 1997; see also Miličević Bradač 2007). Nevertheless, colonial outposts, so-called ‘gateway’ communities (Hirth 1978), were established by the Mycenaeans at points north, in Epirus for example (Tartaron 2004), and so colonial interactions most probably did occur there during the Bronze Age. The larger, more important issue here, however, concerns the postcolonial corrective to archaeological method, which depends on the work of postmodernist scholars such as Said (1978). In particular, postcolonial archaeologists call for the promotion and systematic investigation of local archaeologies as one means of ‘decolonizing’ them (Gosden 2004: 17–18). We, too, apply Said (1978), but we turn him on his head, arguing that ‘Occidentalism’ has exerted undue influence on archaeological discourse concerning the relationship of prehistoric Europe to the East. Adriatic societies, for example, did not experience dependent, colonial interactions with semi-peripheral states, such as the Mycenaeans (Tomas 2009). Rather, all Mediterranean prehistoric societies, including those in the Adriatic, were hybridized products of complex interactions, including but not limited to the appropriation of material culture, that were only very rarely truly colonial.

To interact is human, and in prehistoric Europe, interaction often took place for interaction's sake, not only or simply as a by-product of colonialism. In fact, hybridization itself may be the desired goal, and the sexual overtones in hybridization theory are real and intended (Young 1995). A good example of culture contact, appropriation, and hybridization practices in the Mediterranean can be drawn from Wengrow's (2009) recent analysis of Prepalatial Crete. He has demonstrated that many of the early contacts between Crete and Egypt probably were made between Cretan women and eastern Mediterranean sailors who peddled exotic preciosities – such as scarabs and stone bowls – that appealed to feminine tastes and ritual needs. Hybrid cultural practices and, perhaps, marriages were the result.

Some archaeologists who apply culture contact theory put a surprisingly strong Darwinian spin on the nature of interactions (see examples in Cusick 1998). For instance, Turchin and Hall (2003) have made the rather interesting case, based on research in population ecology, that new cultural forms (i.e., 'hybrids'), just like new species, most often appear at the dynamic edges of territories (i.e., 'frontiers'), where ideas, along with genes, are most likely swapped and recombined in new ways. This being the case, we also can profitably employ cultural transmission theory in our analysis of Mediterranean–European interaction, in particular in our interpretation of archaeological data collected from the fringes of overlapping interactionspheres that spanned the Aegean, the Adriatic, and central Europe.

Cultural transmission theory holds that 'modal' human behaviors are learned and conveyed from one generation to the next through 'conformist transmission' as opposed to 'perfect duplication' (Bettinger 2008: 2–3). The latter, if employed, would pass along the bad, maladaptive behaviors along with the good, whereas in conformist transmission, individuals adopt those behaviors that seem to 'work' (are tried and tested) and disregard those that do not. New behavioral traits may be introduced through individual innovation, or as one result of culture contact. Conformist

transmission makes it unlikely that most new behaviors, whether innovative or introduced, will survive because copying is a safe and inexpensive strategy (Bettinger 2008: 3). But in situations of change, such as might result from contact and incorporation, cultures must adjust, and so the advantage passes to individuals who are 'learners.' Faithful copying is therefore important to cultural survival but is not enough to ensure long-term adaptability. In every culture, there must exist a mix of copiers and learners.

The importance of cultural transmission theory to our analysis becomes apparent when it is inserted into the theoretical framework we constructed above for prehistoric Europe. In a world-systems context where cultures interacted across variable distances and rates of time, through multiple frontier zones, in which individuals possessed agency that they may not ordinarily have possessed, 'learners' gained great power. Such individuals managed to bend the transmission process to their advantage in ways that Helms (1988; 1993; 1998) predicts generally and Kristiansen and Larsson (2005) describe specifically. Learners did not have to reproduce and share faithfully knowledge they had acquired from outside sources, symbolic knowledge in particular. Rather, such knowledge became for Bronze Age elites a currency they, and they alone, could obtain and dispense. This kind of 'selective' duplication, which introduced some foreign traits and not others, often warping those that were introduced, led to rampant appropriation of material culture and, in some cases where contact was sustained and intense, hybridization, a potentially valuable and desirable quality in and of itself.

Things became really interesting, however, when during the course of the Bronze Age, novel behaviors were transformed into modal behaviors and made subject to conformist transmission. When this happened, hybridized material culture and practices began to spread, through parent cultures at first and then later across cultural boundaries. In situations of culture contact and change, in particular when negotiated peripherality proved possible,

new hybrid practices, and peoples, that had formed in frontier zones might reverse-colonize semi-peripheral and core regions, leading to culture change as described above. This is what we assert happened in Europe at the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age. But if this process is to be understood, it must be studied on the ground, at multiple chronological and spatial scales. In this chapter, we therefore present Bronze and Iron Age archaeological data from our study region, much of which is not easily accessible to most archaeologists. We consider it in its local context, integrate it across time and through space, and use it to amend Kristiansen and Larsson's general model of culture contact and change.

Modeling Interaction: From the Aegean to the Adriatic and Back Again

The Aegean

Archaeologists have long recognized that networks of exchange bound Mediterranean to European societies and *vice versa*, and that regional interaction was a key causal factor in Bronze Age sociopolitical change, such as the rise of Aegean states (e.g., Renfrew 1972) (Figure 9.2). Given the importance of exchange, various scholars sought to reconstruct patterns of trade, but they also addressed the mechanisms whereby exchange relationships were enacted and maintained (e.g., Renfrew 1975). Some Bronze Age trade was informal, and exotic goods moved via down-the-line transactions, but much was direct and sustained, linking settlement to settlement across regions. The Bronze Age economy therefore seemed well suited to world-systems analysis (e.g., Frank 1993; Kardulias 1996; Berg 1999). Interaction between Crete and, later, the Greek mainland, on the one hand, and Egypt and various Near Eastern states, on the other, was thought to have stimulated core-periphery relationships that bound the former to the latter. Just what the interacting parties gained through these transactions remains a point of debate. Some archaeologists argue that the Aegean states operated at the margins of the

Mediterranean world-system (e.g., Sherratt 2009), in ‘Potemkin’ fashion (Sherratt 2001), or are skeptical that a prehistoric Mediterranean world-system, in the strict sense of the term, even existed (e.g., Cherry 2009). Others believe that the Aegean states were important (e.g., Kardulias 2009) perhaps even major (e.g., Cline 2009) players. To our way of thinking, however, this debate, wrapped tightly around world-systems theory, only works at the very broadest of spatial and temporal scales, as the protagonists readily admit. If we zoom in on smaller micro-regions and tighten our chronological scope, interesting patterns emerge, which shed general anthropological light on how individuals and their institutions negotiated culture contact in marginal, sometimes frontier, zones.



Figure 9.2. Map of the Aegean with sites mentioned in the text. Produced by J. Seagard, The Field Museum, Chicago, for the authors.

Some Aegean archaeologists have found the ‘small worlds’ approach to be very useful (see Brooks *et al.* 2008, on ‘microhistory’ generally). Broodbank (2000; 2013), for example, has analyzed the ‘small world’ of the Bronze Age Cyclades. Using network analysis, he demonstrated that inter-island exchange relationships were necessary to the rise of complex societies in the archipelago during the Early Bronze Age (beginning ca. 3000 BC). More recently, Knappett *et al.* (2008; see also Knappett 2011) applied a

more sophisticated form of network analysis – based on mathematical models of gravity that allow for ‘imperfect optimization’ – to the Middle Bronze Age southern Aegean, including the Cyclades. They determined that the south Aegean network, including sites on Crete, various Cycladic islands, and the Greek mainland, were prone to ‘homophily’: settlements of similar type were attracted to one another, forming distinct micro-regional interaction zones (Knappett *et al.* 2008: 1018). They also found, however, that some sites managed to fill high rank positions in the overall network, bridging micro-regions, despite their relatively small size. Knappett *et al.* (2008: 1021) argue that these anomalous sites were ‘gateway’ communities that controlled key exchange nodes, attracting and funneling intra- and extra-regional trade. One of these sites was Akrotiri on Thera, which was buried in the island’s volcanic eruption sometime in the seventeenth century BC. Akrotiri, albeit a relatively small site, played an oversized role in the larger network (Knappett *et al.* 2008: 1020–21). It may have been a Minoan ‘colony’ and was a key first step in the western string of island settlements that lead from Crete and, ultimately, to the Greek mainland and the mines of Lavrion (Davis 1979). Akrotiri was also a hotbed of hybridization practices, a place where Cycladic and Minoan peoples mixed and mingled.

Only recently have archaeologists applied the ‘small world’ approach to the mainland of Greece. Pullen and Tartaron (2007; see also Tartaron 2013), for example, treat the Saronic Gulf as a small world, anchored through the early portions of the Bronze Age by the precocious proto-state at Kolonna on Aegina. Kolonna appears to have monitored the mainland’s access to Crete and the wider Mediterranean via the western string. In fact, the purported Minoan colony on Kythera may have given Crete back-door access to the Greek mainland, avoiding Kolonna altogether (Broodbank and Kiriati 2007; cf. Pullen and Tartaron 2007: 156). Kolonna was a gateway community, but given its distance from Crete and its strategic position, it did not interact with the Minoan states, Knossos in particular, in the same way Thera and Kythera did. On Aegina, as opposed to Thera and Kythera, there was more room for negotiated peripherality. Kolonna

sat in a frontier zone, where three different interaction spheres – the Greek mainland, Cycladic, and Minoan – collided. According to Pullen and Tartaron (2007: 156–57), Aegina’s Saronic hegemony came to an abrupt end with the rise of Mycenae and the establishment of a Mycenaean community at Korphos on the western shore of the gulf at the start of the Late Bronze Age, ca. 1600 BC. Korphos may have disrupted the Saronic network, tipping the system away from Kolonna and toward a rising power, Mycenae, that possessed its own, direct access to Minoan and wider trade routes.

The above Aegean machinations, involving Knossos, Mycenae, and Kolonna, all of which are tied to culture contact and interaction, retain a distinctly world-systemic flavor: macro-economic, substantivist, and unfolding over the *longue durée* (cf. Chase-Dunn and Mann 1998). World-systems theory also flavors archaeological analyses of Mycenaean interactions in the ‘heartland,’ i.e., the Peloponnesus. Based on an analysis of obsidian artifacts, which in the Aegean must have been imported from the island of Melos, Kardulias (2007b) has argued that as early as the Early Bronze Age ‘gateway’ communities in the southern Argolid regulated access to obsidian. According to him (Kardulias 2007b: 111–13), obsidian exchange could not be controlled by Mycenaean elites for a variety of reasons, and was therefore not subject to world-systems cycles as was, for instance, foreign international trade.

Parkinson (2007) identified an identical pattern in Messenia, where obsidian was distributed from the coastal site of Romanou to all other sites in the region, including Pylos. Extra-local interaction thereby affected Mycenaean ‘domestic’ economies and sociopolitical organization in various ways and at multiple scales, over the long term – obsidian had been mined at Melos since at least the Upper Paleolithic (Torrence 1986) – but also over the short term, as *événements* and *conjonctures* that occurred and evolved within the 100-year life-span of the Mycenaean palaces (Schon 2009). Wright (2004) has argued that certain sites were linked to Mycenaean palaces in systems of mutual

dependency and that these sites tended to grow and flourish during the palace period. Such a relationship likely linked Romanou to Pylos (Galaty and Parkinson 2007: 12–13). Thus, world-systems effects relating to interaction and control of trade shaped Mycenaean peoples at both regional and local scales, over long and short spans of time. This is perhaps to be expected if we think of the Mycenaean states as semi-peripheral intermediaries that brokered European trade with Minoan and eastern Mediterranean states. But what about the situation on the northern Mycenaean border where those European trade relationships were forged?

Feuer (1999; 2003) has argued that the Mycenaean periphery ran across northern Greece from Thessaly to Epirus. Points along and north of this boundary only marginally engaged the Mycenaean states, and *vice versa*. Several archaeologists, however, have challenged Feuer. Based on excavations conducted at Dimini, which revealed a Mycenaean megaron and settlement, and recent surveys in the vicinity of the Pagasetic Gulf, Adrimi-Sismani (2007) has argued that Thessaly was well integrated into the Mycenaean world-system. Dimini, which Adrimi-Sismani (2007: 159–60) equates with Homeric Iolkos, may have acted as a Mycenaean ‘gateway’ to the Thessalian plain, and thence west to southern Albania and Epirus. Likewise, Mycenaean outposts in the northern Sporades (Adrimi-Sismani 2007: 160–61) and on the island of Thasos (Mee 2008: 370) allowed access to Macedonia and Thrace, and via rivers like the Vardar and Maritza, to the Balkan interior (Mitrevski 1999). As compared to Thessaly, the Mycenaean presence in northwest Greece is less well attested. The mountainous regions of Acarnania and Aetolia appear to have been only lightly settled during Mycenaean times (Boommelje and Doorn 1987), but there is growing evidence for contacts between western coastal Greece and Italy (Ridgway 2006), perhaps via Mycenaean settlements in the Ionian islands (Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 2000), possible location of Odysseus’s home, Ithaka.

Tartaron (2004; 2005; see also Tartaron and Zachos 1999) has made the compelling case that the site of Glykys Limin,

located in Epirus near Preveza, was a Mycenaean outpost. It is associated with a small tholos tomb and modest amounts of Mycenaean and 'Mycenaeanizing' pottery. Given the lithic assemblage, the residents may have processed and exported hides. Whether the occupants of Epirus (i.e., northwestern Greece and southern Albania) were ethnically 'Mycenaean' (i.e., Greek speakers) is unclear, but this seems unlikely given the region's later history. How they reacted to Mycenaean contacts is equally unclear. Here, we reach the limits of the Mycenaean world, and world-systems theory, and encounter processes of culture contact that are best modeled through time on the local scale.

The Adriatic

The Bronze Age states of the northeastern Peloponnesus, including Mycenae itself, were situated to control trade north from the Argolic Gulf to the Corinthian Gulf and onward to the Adriatic. Pylos in Messenia is likewise positioned to intercept ships coming from western Crete as they rounded the cape. Some of these ships made for Mycenaean ports in Italy, in the Aeolian Islands and in Apulia (Jones *et al.* 2002), but others may have continued up the coast toward the Adriatic via the Ionian Sea. The Adriatic provided one point of access to central Europe via the *Caput Adriae* (Teržan 2007). Another was via the northern Aegean, as described above. Here, we focus on the Adriatic route, along the eastern shore specifically (Figure 9.3). This region, which encompasses Albania and several states of the former Yugoslavia, is poorly known by most foreign archaeologists; it appears as a blank spot on many maps of European prehistoric archaeology. But it would have been a key possible route of trade and interaction, linking the Aegean to Europe throughout prehistory. It therefore represents an ideal testing ground for Kristiansen and Larsson's (2005) model.



Figure 9.3. Map of the eastern Adriatic coast with sites mentioned in the text. Produced by J. Seagard, The Field Museum, Chicago, for the authors.

That the Mycenaeans and their predecessors had some kind of contact with Balkan and European peoples is indisputable. Baltic amber reached the Aegean in large quantities during the Bronze Age, presumably by way of the Adriatic but also, perhaps, across the Balkan peninsula (Palavestra 2007). It has been suggested that the 15 kg of gold found in the Shaft Graves at Mycenae, including 28 solid-gold vessels, were imported from Transylvania (Davis 1983; but see Vavelidis and Andreou 2008). And Balkan artifacts were found on the Uluburun ship, which wrecked around 1300 BC, including a ‘Danubian-style’ sword and a possibly Bulgarian stone ceremonial mace-ax (Pulak 1997). Clearly, Aegean Bronze Age elites were interested in prestige goods and materials of Balkan and European origin, but what did the northerners gain through these transactions? Here, we may use Albania as an example.

Albania

Numerous Bronze Age artifacts of purported Aegean derivation have been found in Albania (see reviews by Bejko [1993](#); [1994](#); [2002](#)). The majority of these artifacts are metal. Most are weapons – swords, daggers, knives, and spearheads – that date primarily to the Middle and early Late Bronze Age (roughly Middle Helladic I to Late Helladic IIa, although an Italian-style dagger from the tumulus at Vajzë may date to the Early Bronze Age; Bejko [1994](#): 116). Nearly all were recovered from mortuary contexts, from tumuli in particular. Some of these are associated with Grey Minyan pottery that dates to the Middle Bronze Age, ca. 1800–1600 BC (Bejko [1994](#): 111–12). Very little certain Mycenaean (or ‘Mycenaeanizing’) pottery has been found in Albania, despite years of excavation and several recent full-coverage, intensive regional surveys; almost all of it comes from tumuli. What pottery has been found is usually very late Mycenaean, Late Helladic IIIC and later (Bejko [1993](#); [1994](#): 122–23).

There is thus an interesting shift in the Aegean–Albanian trade relationship that occurs at the start of the Mycenaean period. It seems quite likely that early Aegean traders worked their way north from Ionian bases and that they were after copper ores, of which there are numerous sources in Albania (Galaty [2007](#)). Tumuli with Aegean metal artifacts are found clustered in populated areas near the coast and in regions near ore sources, such as Korçë (Bejko [1994](#): 105) and Mati (Lafe and Galaty [2009](#): 108). Access to Aegean weapons appears to have dwindled when the Mycenaean fully entered the eastern Mediterranean world-system at the start of Late Helladic III. When trade connections between Greece and Albania were reestablished in the late or perhaps sub-Mycenaean phase, it was fine, painted pottery that was imported, not weapons.

Bronze Age proto-‘Illyrians’ appear to have lived in trans-egalitarian societies, led by warrior chieftains, and one source of their power may have been their ability, à la Helms, to attract and maintain trade relations with their

southern Greek neighbors. But they appear to have experienced almost no culture change through such contact. There are no hybridized features extant in Bronze Age Albanian material culture. There was some appropriation of Mycenaean prestige goods – i.e., finished metal objects, such as swords and daggers – but not the symbols or ideas relating to hierarchy and state-level political institutions. Illyrian chiefs were involved in trade and benefited from it, but were not transformed by it. When access to Aegean weapons ended, nothing changed.

When it comes to paths whereby elite institutions (e.g., the warrior king; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005: 88) were passed north from the eastern Mediterranean by way of the Aegean to Europe, Albania was a broken link. We must jump north along the eastern Adriatic coast several hundred miles before we find a fortified Bronze Age site, Monkodonja in Istria, that bears any resemblance whatsoever to an Aegean citadel (Figure 9.4). According to Kristiansen and Larsson (2005: 162), Monkodonja indicates ‘an early phase of east Mediterranean colonization in the Adriatic region.’ So what of the Istrian and Dalmatian coast? Were models of eastern Mediterranean aristocracy passed north along the Dalmatian coast, having skipped Albania? Or did they reach Monkodonja and points further afield by alternate routes, if at all?



Figure 9.4. The walls of Monkodonja. Courtesy of the Archives of the Archaeological Museum of Istria, Pula, Croatia, 2008. Photograph by B. Hänsel.

Istria and Dalmatia

There are numerous potential problems with regard to treating Monkodonja as an Aegean Bronze Age colony. The main one is chronological. In their earlier publications, the excavators of Monkodonja speculated about possible Mycenaean involvement in the construction of the settlement. This was based on its complex architectural features and small fragments of imported pottery that were described initially as ‘Mycenaean,’ but without more specific attributions (Mihovilić *et al.* 2002: 50; 2005: 403). More recent publications, however, find a more suitable comparison for the Monkodonja fortifications and their complex entrance system with the eighth phase of the town at Kolonna (Stadt VIII) on Aegina (Hänsel 2007: 153, n. 22, pl. XXXIIIb; Mihovilić *et al.* 2005: 398). According to Walter and Felten (1981: 10), Kolonna Stadt VIII is dated between 1900–1800 BC (the transition from Middle Helladic I–II) (Wild *et al.* 2010: 1020), which significantly predates the beginning of the Mycenaean culture, especially the period of their expansion to the northern Adriatic (Marazzi 2003). In

fact, recently acquired radiocarbon dates from Monkodonja confirm that the fortifications were built in the period that corresponds to the Middle rather than Late Helladic (Hänsel *et al.* 2007).

Once we remove the possibility of specific Mycenaean influences at Monkodonja, there is very little left to tie the site to the Late Bronze Age Aegean. The number of foreign finds, especially those that point southward, is small. These include clay tripods that have been compared to those from Crete and Cyprus; a small bronze knife thought to show Aegean links (even though its small size precludes establishing certain Aegean affinities); and bones of animals that appear to have been brought from the south (Hänsel and Teržan 1999: 87–89, 95–96; see Hänsel and Teržan 2000 for a German version of the same paper). Nevertheless, Hänsel (2002: 84–86, 89, 97) believes Monkodonja was a focal Adriatic intermediary in maritime trade between the Aegean and the north. If this interpretation were correct, however, one would expect to find much more foreign material at the site. In any case, the lack of persuasive Mycenaean artifacts at Monkodonja, or anywhere else along the eastern Adriatic coast north of Albania (see Tomas 2005; 2009), speaks against the possibility that Late Bronze Age outposts served to channel Aegean material and ideas to central Europe along this route.

As was the case with Albania, there is much more evidence for contact between Dalmatia and the Aegean during the earlier phases of the Bronze Age. If we concentrate on the Early Helladic period, for example, we see that it is precisely Early Helladic III Kolonna (Niemeier 1995) and a number of other Early Helladic III Greek sites (see below) that show more abundant evidence for contact with the eastern Adriatic. A major portion of the eastern Adriatic area was at that time occupied by the Cetina culture (Figure 9.5), which in terms of foreign trade represents the region's Bronze Age apogee (Maran 2007: 15–18).



Figure 9.5. Kotorac-type vessel of the Cetina culture. From Dimitrijević *et al.* 1998: 176, with permission of the authors.

Bronze objects have been discovered in a number of Cetina tumuli. Most probably these were obtained through trade, and the lack of evidence for metal production at Cetina sites suggests that they were imported as finished products (Marović and Čović 1983: 217). Decorated bronze daggers are the most elaborate metal objects found, though simpler forms are also known, of which the most significant is a knife from the site of Bitelić. It has been compared to a knife from Sesklo (Marović and Čović 1983: 207, pl. 33/7), although Albanian parallels have been proposed as well (Govedarica 1989:172). The chance find of a collection of gold items from Nin-Privlaka is also significant for examining Aegean connections. It includes biconical necklace beads similar to those from Tumulus R 26 at Steno

in Leukas, Troy Ilg, and Poliochni, and golden bands compared to the Early Minoan II–III finds from the Mochlos and Platanos cemeteries in Crete (Vinski 1959: 210–11; Tomas 2011). The construction of the Steno tumuli at Leukas, as well as of some tumuli in the western Peloponnese, has been compared to that of early Cetina tumuli (Govedarica 1989: 125–26, 217). Given the later date of most Greek tumuli, it seems highly likely that this burial tradition spread north to south from the Balkans to Greece (Müller-Celka 2007).

In addition to the metal examples discussed above, finds of Cetina pottery in Greece have been taken to indicate maritime trade between the Aegean and the Adriatic (Marović and Čović 1983: 207). Cetina pottery is distinguished by its rich decoration. Perhaps its elaborate appearance was the reason why it had a wide distribution: associated groups have been found in Albania and along the Italian and northern Adriatic coasts, but also as far away as Malta, the Peloponnesus, and the Saronic Gulf (Govedarica 1989: 132, 142–44; Nicolis 2005: 534–35; Maran 2007: pl. IIIb; Borgna and Càssola Guida 2009). Among the many significant finds of this pottery at Greek sites, such as Kolonna, Korakou, Lerna, Mycenae, Prosymna, Tiryns, Tsoungiza, and Zygouries, the material from the Altis in Olympia is considered crucial. Here, in addition to imported Cetina pottery, local Grey Minyan ware imitated Cetina styles of decoration (Rambach 2007: 86).

The abundance of Cetina pottery in the Aegean provides good evidence for some type of regular exchange. In fact, it has been suggested that at least some of the above-mentioned Greek sites were part of a network of trading posts established by Cetina people along the coast of the eastern Adriatic, then across the Ionian islands and the Peloponnesus to the vibrant trading system of the Aegean Sea (Maran 2007: 16; Rambach 2007: 86). If this were so, then the Cetina culture constitutes a unique east Adriatic example of regular Bronze Age contacts with the Aegean. Present evidence suggests that it was through such trade that Cetina people acquired precious metal objects from the

Aegean, most of which were found in burial contexts, suggesting that just as in Middle and Late Bronze Age Albania, they were used to enhance the social status of the deceased.

Good examples of this process come from three tumuli with luxurious grave goods found along the Montenegrin part of the eastern Adriatic, south of the Cetina region: Mala Gruda and Velika Gruda near Kotor and Boljevića Gruda near Podgorica. Golden rings discovered in them, probably head ornaments, have been compared to those from the Early Helladic II Tumulus R 15b at Steno on the island of Leukas (Primas 1996: 75–88, 146; Maran 2007: n. 42). Maran (2007: 9) emphasizes that the center of distribution of such golden rings lies in the Balkans and the Carpathian Basin, and that the Leukas examples therefore probably represent Balkan imports to northwest Greece, in which case they do not support the expansion of Aegean contacts and ideas north during the Early Bronze Age; rather, it was the other way around. In addition to these rings, however, there are two other significant items in the Mala Gruda tumulus: (1) a golden dagger, which may be Aegean, Levantine, or Anatolian, and (2) a silver shaft-hole axe, at first interpreted as Dalmatian and then as Aegean in origin (references in Tomas 2009). These objects do point toward the south, and they were obviously objects of great value and importance.

Back Again

Returning to Kristiansen and Larsson (2005), we are now in a position to reevaluate the archaeological data as they relate to the idea that hierarchical institutions, such as that of the warrior king, spread north to Europe from the eastern Mediterranean via Aegean intermediaries. In order to have Bronze Age warriors, there must have been warfare. And for these warriors to have become kings, they must have had access to hierarchical political institutions. Kristiansen and Larsson make the case that the European idea of kingship, which was linked to war, spread to the continent from the Near East during the later Bronze Age. But the earliest evidence for war in Europe is associated not with the Aegean

but with Neolithic defensive enclosures, and these are found only rarely in the wide geographic arc that encompasses Iberia, southern France, the Adriatic, and western Greece (Parkinson and Duffy 2007: 99, fig. 2). This pattern may be linked to the region's Mediterranean environment, which encouraged grain agriculture versus cattle herding (Halstead 1994). Without cattle herds, there were no cattle raids – the main reason for enclosures and one of the primary sources of conflict in prehistoric societies (Runnels *et al.* 2009).

Warfare and a warrior culture did not evolve in the Aegean. Nor were they transferred there from points east. Rather, they spread to the Aegean from Europe in the Early to Middle Bronze Age, together with the tradition of tumulus burial, possibly through contact with the Cetina culture. Warrior graves are not found in the Cyclades during the earlier Bronze Age, nor are they associated with Minoan Crete, so these societies could not and did not provide the primary institutional template for Mycenaean kingship. Mycenaean political hierarchy, which formed the basis for Mycenaean state organization, was the fabricated product of a European warrior ethos mixed with Minoan forms of regional economic control based around palatial centers. Mycenaean political authority was a hybrid product of appropriation, of European *and* Minoan materials and practices. It owed very little to the eastern Mediterranean.

When the Minoan states collapsed, the Mycenaeans took control of Aegean systems of trade and exchange (Parkinson and Galaty 2007; Galaty *et al.* 2009). Cline (2007) has demonstrated that absolute numbers of foreign imports to Mycenaean states spiked in the Late Helladic IIIB period at the same time there was a precipitous decline in Minoan foreign imports. Foreign imports decline in both regions in Late Helladic IIIC. Parkinson (2010) has reanalyzed Cline's data, grouping artifacts from similar contexts, similar periods, and similar origins into 'contacts.' This effort produced several pertinent patterns. First, the number of foreign contacts with Mycenaean states holds steady from Late Helladic IIIB to Late Helladic IIIC. Second, during Late Helladic IIIB, most foreign contacts took place via the

palaces, and the vast majority were with the palace at Mycenae itself. Conversely, the vast majority of Late Helladic IIIC foreign contacts are indicated by artifacts from burial contexts, for example at Perati. And finally, there is some evidence that foreign contacts with the Aegean actually increased in the early Iron Age, at the start of the so-called Greek 'Dark Age.' Jones (2000), for example, catalogued 380 early Iron Age foreign items on Crete, almost as many as the 407 documented for the Late Bronze Age. The early Iron Age frequency of 7.62 items per decade, as calculated by Parkinson (2010: 20), actually exceeds that of the Late Bronze Age.

The vast majority of Mycenaean contacts (*sensu* Parkinson 2010) during the Late Bronze Age were with eastern states – Egypt, Cyprus, and along the Levantine coast – made primarily with Mycenae. This stands in stark contrast to the patterns established above for the Early Bronze Age, when peoples living in Greece traded with and were heavily influenced by peoples living to the north, in particular in western Greece. In later periods, as the influence of Kolonna waned and mainland Greece was drawn more fully into the Minoan orbit, their northern contacts revolved more and more exclusively around metal and metal items. Whereas they may have searched the Adriatic for metal in the Middle Bronze Age and early Late Helladic, in Late Helladic III they gained full access to eastern, particularly Cypriot, sources, and contacts with the north were altered or severed. These were renewed in Late Helladic IIIC, as indicated by late Mycenaean pottery in Albanian tumuli (Bejko 1993; 1994) and Naue II swords of northern origin in the 'warrior graves' of the northwest Peloponnesus (Papadopoulou 2007). The consequences of these renewed northern trade connections were profound.

Our analysis indicates that precisely during the time that Mycenaean states were in the best position to transmit Near Eastern objects, symbols, and ideas to Europe via the eastern Adriatic (during the Late Helladic IIIA–B), *they had no, or very few, northern contacts*. Those contacts that did exist were focused largely on the export of pottery, not material culture

related to warfare and hierarchy. It was only after the Mycenaean states had disappeared that trade connections with the north surged once again, but most of the interaction was tilted from north to south. Trade was funneled through the Adriatic, Italy in particular, and on to the Aegean via the Gulf of Corinth, along the so-called 'Great Isthmus Corridor Route' (Kase *et al.* 1991). Mycenaean settlements in the Ionian Islands were not abandoned; in fact, they grew and may have been primary destinations for 'refugee' populations who fled the Peloponnesus (Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 394). The so-called 'handmade burnished ware' (HBW) pottery, exceedingly common throughout southern Europe north of Greece, in Late Bronze and early Iron Age Albania for example, is found throughout the Aegean beginning in the Late Helladic IIIC, often at former palace sites, and in large numbers at Chania and Kommos on Crete (Shaw 1998). The spread of HBW through Greece marks the reintegration of the west Adriatic and Aegean interaction spheres (Belardelli and Bettelli 2007).

With reintegration came new trade goods, including amber, supplies of which had waned during the Late Bronze Age. Much of the early Iron Age amber that moved into Greece came via Italy (Harding 1984: 246, 259; 2000:190; Palavestra 1993: 251; Càssola Guida 1999), but it is also found in tremendous amounts in the Balkans. In Albania, for example, there are only 61 amber artifacts known from the entire Bronze Age, the majority of which date to the tail end of the Late Bronze Age, but there are hundreds of examples from later, Iron Age tumuli (Kurti 2013). To the north in Serbia, amber is associated with the so-called 'Princely Grave' phenomenon, a complex of extremely wealthy warrior graves dating to the late Iron Age (Palavestra 1994; 1995). Palavestra (1994; 1995) associates the development of Balkan forms of social complexity and hierarchy, symbolized by the 'Princely Graves,' with Iron Age expansion of livestock herding and short-distance, vertical transhumance. Cattle functioned as 'wealth on the hoof' but were subject to raids, thereby leading to intensified competition and conflict between tribal units throughout the course of the Iron Age, and to a reinvigoration of the warrior

ethos, including burial in tumuli. This lifestyle and the elaboration of hierarchical political institutions linked to warfare are typical of the Iron Age throughout all of Europe, including ‘Celtic’ Europe, the primary source for modern-day, stereotyped images of warrior kings (Thurston 2009: 347–48).

It is as yet unclear what caused the collapse of the Mycenaean states (Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 390–92), but it is relatively clear that the European Iron Age lifestyle and warrior ethos encompassed the Aegean as well. During the Greek ‘Dark Ages,’ there was an intensified focus on livestock, as described by Palmer (2001: 171):

The main differences between Mycenaean and Dark Age land use lay in the Dark Age emphasis on herds as wealth, and the extensive use of land for grazing, which was possible due to the low population, and lack of competition between crop cultivation and herding.

Greek Iron Age chiefs, like their northern neighbors, were also interred in spectacular graves, the so-called ‘warrior burials,’ particularly common in Achaea, a region well positioned to control trade through the Gulf of Corinth (Deger-Jalkotzy 2006). The most spectacular of these Greek warrior burials comes from the site of Lefkandi in Euboea, from the cemetery of Toumba. There a mound was raised over a destroyed, monumental (50 × 13.8 m) structure, an apsidal longhouse, which contained two burials, one of a man and one of a woman, dating to ca. 950 BC (Popham *et al.* 1982). These internments were accompanied by four horse burials, symbolic of the warrior-herding culture of the Iron Age, and held a wide range of exotic artifacts, from the eastern Mediterranean and Europe (Nightingale 2007).

The individuals buried at Lefkandi embody and represent in stunning fashion the processes we have outlined above: the flow of objects and ideas from Europe to the Aegean during the Iron Age – e.g., elaboration of a warrior ethos,

based on a western model, including burial in tumuli, exactly repeating patterns of culture contact that had been established first in the earlier Bronze Age but were neglected under the Mycenaeans. Iron Age cultural transmission generated in the Aegean a fantastic, new material culture and cultural practices that were as much products of Europe as they were of the East, and were therefore very different from the preceding Mycenaean material culture and cultural practices. As Morris (1999: 77) describes with regard to Dark Age Greece:

The most reasonable interpretation ... is that the peripheral relationship [of the Greeks] to the East was something constructed in context by knowledgeable social actors. Some Greeks keenly sought out the East; others resisted it. In some times and places ... the East had an overwhelming presence; in other times and places ... it was apparently consciously ignored.

Our data indicate that in the Early Bronze and early Iron Ages, the Aegean largely rejected the East in favor of the West. For this reason, European social complexity was as much an indigenous development as it was a product of contact with the eastern Mediterranean.

Conclusion: Contact, Transmission, Hybridization

As we have tried to demonstrate, Kristiansen and Larsson's (2005) work of synthesis provides a broad base from which to launch micro-historical analytical investigations of specific regions through time, drawing on local archaeological records. Our study of the route of interaction that connected the eastern Mediterranean to the Adriatic and Europe via the Aegean reveals just how much spatial, chronological, and social variation there was in this one

particular zone of interaction. We cannot say that Kristiansen and Larsson's (2005) model for the rise of complex societies in Europe is wrong. But we can say that objects and ideas, symbols and people, often moved through the Eurasian world-system in unexpected ways. Our data indicate that culture contact between Europe and the Aegean, in both the Bronze and the Iron Age, had surprising, sometimes unintended consequences, which in some cases run counter to general expectations. Certainly, old ideas of *ex oriente lux*, which are the basis for pernicious forms of 'Occidentalism,' can be roundly rejected.

At the most general analytical scales, encompassing all of Eurasia and over the *longue durée*, we believe we can see the effects of interaction as described by Helms (1988; 1993; 1998). In this, we very much agree with Kristiansen and Larsson (2005: 17): Bronze Age people throughout Europe exploited access to esoteric objects and knowledge, related to metal in particular, in order to enhance their power over others, and this was one potential source of increased social hierarchy. It seems to us, however, that only rarely were such objects and knowledge inserted into existing European institutions in ways that were truly imitative of eastern models; transmission and imitation (i.e., 'copying') seem to have been the exception, not the rule. As Cherry (2009: 138) describes for Prepalatial Crete:

...an explanatory roadblock that requires further research concerns the fact that we have little idea about the semantic connotations of the objects reaching Crete from overseas, especially from Egypt. Were *any* objects transferred in a way that preserved the associated meanings they exemplified in the original culture? Or were these associations discarded, transformed, or hybridized in the act of transfer?

Given the very low levels of interregional contact that we have documented for our study region, it is difficult to see

how objects symbolic of kingship, retrieved from distant lands, might have held their meaning and served as vehicles for European social transformation. This problem is particularly acute given that even during the periods when there was the most contact, the Early Bronze and early Iron Ages, the relationships forged were not ones of dependency. In world-systems terms, Bronze Age Europe was truly marginal: it was linked to the Mediterranean but was politically independent. It did not experience any of the incorporative processes outlined by Hall (1986; 1998a; 1998b; 2000; 2001). The Aegean, on the other hand, did, but in ways that encouraged negotiated peripherality (cf. Morris 1999, quoted above) and led to hybridization. Hybridization practices are a common product of culture contact in frontier zones, where one population actively engages or colonizes another (Turchin and Hall 2003). The Mycenaeans, for example, experienced and adopted Minoan cultural practices in just such a context, in the Cycladic buffer zone that separated them from Crete (Broodbank 2000; Knappett *et al.* 2008). But they also experienced and adopted European cultural practices through their ‘gateway’ communities in the Adriatic, in southern Italy, and in Epirus. These communities were not colonial in the true sense of the word. They were outposts only. Meaningful interaction between Mycenaeans and natives up the eastern Adriatic coast, therefore, was limited or nonexistent (a conclusion also reached in Tomas 2009).

Local, transformative interactions between the Aegean and the Adriatic first occurred not during the Mycenaean period but rather during the Early Bronze Age, during which time ‘Helladic’ individuals interacted with ‘Cetina’ individuals. It was the former who were transformed through these interactions, however, not the latter. Cetina culture already emphasized the importance of warfare, metal weapons, and individualizing burial in monumental tombs, well before these became standard features of Helladic culture, the primary bases for later, Mycenaean power relations. If there was any diffusion of objects, symbols, and ideas related to warrior aristocracy, it seems more likely that these moved from Europe to the Aegean via the Adriatic in the Early

Bronze Age, not the other way around, and long before any meaningful contact was established with the eastern Mediterranean.

In the dynamic region of the Adriatic, in the small-world where Epirus, Illyria, Italy, and the Ionian Islands all meet, creating a frontier zone that is still apparent today, aggrandizing Early Bronze Age ‘big men’ met and mixed in gateway communities up and down the coast. Those from the north transmitted war-related objects – e.g., shaft-hole hammer axes – to their southern neighbors. At first, these objects trickled into Greece, adopted by ‘learners’ who used them to leverage nascent forms of social inequality. Eventually they introduced new forms of burial as well, i.e., tumuli, which mark the shift to what is regarded as chiefdom-level political organization (Pullen 2008). These changes suggested to early archaeologists that an invasion had rocked Greece at the transition from the Early Bronze to the Middle Bronze Age (e.g., Caskey 1960), but Forsén (1992) demonstrated convincingly that the spatial and chronological distribution of these artifacts and features did not fit an invasion pattern. This is not to say that there was no conflict at all; rather, the transition from the Early to the Middle Helladic appears to have been marked by interregional violence and a retreat to inland systems of settlement in the Middle Bronze Age (Wright 2008). The violence that accompanied the transition to the Middle Helladic in Greece signals a cultural shift whereby ‘novel’ behaviors, derived from the north during the Early Bronze Age, were transformed into ‘modal’ behaviors by the start of the Middle Bronze Age. This cultural transformation allowed the remarkable fluorescence of Greek warrior culture best symbolized by the Shaft Graves at Mycenae, which present an interesting mix of local and foreign grave goods, the hybridized recipe for Mycenaean kings.

What is most startling about the Greek early Iron Age, as we have presented it above, is how closely patterns of change at the end of the Mycenaean period mimic those that occurred at the end of the Early Bronze Age, and with very similar results: the introduction of new northern weapon

types; apsidal houses; intramural and tumulus burial; new forms of social and political organization; and a hybridized material culture that points East and West. Our analysis indicates that the new cultural forms that characterized Dark Age Greece are similar to those that characterized Middle Bronze Age Greece because they had similar European origins. Europe and the Aegean have similar cultural systems not because they both stem ultimately from the East, but rather because they both responded to similar, world-systemic effects, a beautiful example of what Turchin and Hall (2003: 38–39) call large-scale, cyclic spatial synchronicity:

Ecological models show that if two (or more) systems separated in space are driven by largely endogenous dynamics, and if their endogenous dynamics are broadly similar (e.g. have approximately the same period), then their cycles may be synchronized by a variety of shared exogenous perturbations, and these perturbations need not be very strong.

This, we assert, explains the macro-scale patterns synthesized by Kristiansen and Larsson (2005). Two systems, European and Aegean, oscillating, brought in and out of phase with one another, reacting to the East but not of the East.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Bernard Knapp and Peter van Dommelen for their invitation to contribute to this book. We have enjoyed immensely the opportunity to take an even closer look at the Bronze and Iron Age archaeology of the Aegean and eastern Adriatic. We are grateful to our many European colleagues who provided papers and reports that would have been otherwise very difficult, or impossible, to obtain. We also thank Oliver Dickinson for his extensive comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

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10 Greece in the Early Iron Age: Mobility, Commodities, Politics, and Literacy

John K. Papadopoulos

Abstract

This chapter confronts the systemic divide in modern scholarship that separates Aegean prehistory from Classical archaeology and considers its ramifications. In so doing, the problems of periodization, absolute chronology, and regionality are tackled. It advocates an approach that follows an historical continuum, allowing social and political experiments in the Bronze Age their influence on the early Iron Age. It also advocates looking at Greece holistically, not just from predetermined cores, whether Mycenaean palaces or Archaic city-states, and suggests that some of the most important developments in political structure occurred in the tribal, clan-based areas of the Greek world, often regarded as the fringes. The core of the chapter focuses on several critical developments in Iron Age Greece that were to have an impact on the Mediterranean. Among these were overseas travel and settlement, as well as the quest for metals. The latter is not seen simply against the backdrop of technological innovations or the vicissitudes of supply, but rather involves a real search for structuring commodities of value that ultimately led to an economic system of exchange not limited to elites. The culmination is the invention of coinage. The other great innovation represents no less of a revolution: literacy. It is not just the adoption of the Phoenician alphabet or of a technology of writing that is important, but the introduction of alphabetic writing to the unique cultural context of Iron

Age Greece. For the first time in world history, writing was not limited to a scribal class serving a ruling elite, but instead served as a tool that could be exploited by anyone.

Introduction

Since the overviews in the 1970s by Snodgrass (1971), Desborough (1972), and Coldstream (1977), the early Iron Age of Greece has seen a great deal of scholarly activity. Much of this has been fueled by new discoveries (summarized in Dickinson 2006). The map (Figure 10.1) lists many of the principal sites with important remains from the period between ca. 1200–700 BC. Coupled with new discoveries are new perspectives that have shaped and redefined the way we view the period, beginning with the seminal work of Snodgrass (e.g., 2006), and continuing with the contributions of de Polignac (1984), Morris (1987), and many others.



Figure 10.1. *facing page.* Map of Greece showing principal early Iron Age sites (prepared by John K. Papadopoulos and Christine Johnston). Site List: 1. Korkyra, 2. Kalpaki, 3. Liatovouni, 4. Vitsa, 5. Dodona, 6. Polis, 7. Aetos, 8. Same, 9. Astakos, 10. Agrinion, 11. Palaïomanina, 12. Gavalou, 13. Kalydon, 14. Kryoneri, 15. Derveni, 16. Aigeira, 17. Ano Mazaraki, 18. Asani, 19. Aigion, 20. Batra, 21. Chalandritsa, 22. Pharai, 23. Valmantoura, 24. Katarrates, 25. Phlamboura, 26. Elis, 27. Keramidia, 28. Agrapidochori, 29. Lasteika, 30. Salamoni, 31. Ayios Andreas, 32. Olympia, 33.

Samikon, 34. Gryllos, 35. Rizes, 36. Malthi, 37. Tsoukaleika, 38. Ordines, 39. Volimedia, 40. Ano Englianios, 41. Beylerbey, 42. Pylos, 43. Traganes, 44. Koryphasion & Osmanaga, 45. Koukounara, 46. Kaphirio, 47. Nichoria, 48. Antheia & Aithaia, 49. Volimnos, 50. Pellana, 51. Sparta, 52. Amyklai, 53. Kardamyli, 54. Mavrovani, 55. Geraki, 56. Epidauros Limera, 57. Kato Leivadi, 58. Asea, 59. Tegea, 60. Mantinea, 61. Lerna, 62. Argos, 63. Mycenae, 64. Berbati, 65. Tiryns, 66. Nauplion, 67. Asine, 68. Vista, 69. Halieis, 70. Kranidhi, 71. Hermione, 72. Sambariza, 73. Troezen, 74. Kalauria, 75. Megalochori; Methana, 76. Kounoupitsa, 77. Oga, 78. Loutra, 79. Phlius, 80. Kleonai, 81. Vellow, 82. Corinth, 83. Athikai, 84. Isthmia, 85. Perachora, 86. Ayia Theodoroi, 87. Megara, 88. Salamis, 89. Aigina, 90. Aphaia, 91. Eleusis, 92. Athens, 93. Palai Kokkinia, 94. Phaleron & Mounychia, 95. Mt. Hymettos, 96. Aliko, 97. Anavyssos, 98. Vari, 99. Merenda, 100. Thorikos, 101. Laurion, 102. Spata, 103. Menidi, 104. Marathon, 105. Liossia, 106. Skala Oropou, 107. Panakton, 108. Thebes, 109. Rhitsona, 110. Paralimni, 111. Haliartos, 112. Askra, 113. Mali, 114. Medeon, 115. Khirra, 116. Galayidion, 117. Itea, 118. Delphi, 119. Amphissa, 120. Vranesi, 121. Orchomenos, 122. Mavroneri, 123. Amphikteia, 124. Ayios Athanasios; Modi, 125. Elateia, 126. Kalapodi, 127. Hyampolis, 128. Agnanti, 129. Ai-Georgis, 130. Megaplatanos, 131. Livanates; Kynos, 132. Atlanti, 133. Kastraki, 134. Mitrou & Tragana Lokridos, 135. Likhas, 136. Yialtra, 137. Oreoi, 138. Rovies, 139. Kerinthos, 140. Psakhna, 141. Theologos, 142. Chalkis, 143. Nea Lampsakos, 144. Lefkandi, 145. Phylla, 146. Eretria, 147. Magoula, 148. Amarynthos, 149. Plakari, 150. Avlonari, 151. Oxyolithos, 152. Kyme, 153. Skyros Cemetery, 154. Parliani, 155. Perivoli, 156. Ypati, 157. Arkhani, 158. Bikiorema, 159. Lamia, 160. Stylis, 161. Pteleon, 162. Halos, 163. Phthiotic Thebes, 164. Yelestino; Pherai, 165. Aerinos, 166. Sesklo, 167. Kapakli, 168. Megali Velanidia, 169. Iolkos, 170. Volos, 171. Lestiani, 172. Maleai, 173. Argalasti, 174. Theotokou, 175. Domolkos; Neo Monastiri, 176. Pharsala, 177. Plaikastro, 178. Ktouri, 179. Karditsa, 180. Phiki, 181. Trikkala, 182. Krannon, 183. Argissa, 184. Nea Lefki, 185. Larisa, 186. Marmariani, 187. Chasambali, 188.

Argyroupoli, 189. Homolion, 190. Elasson; Chyretiai, 191. Retziouni, 192. Dion, 193. Methone, 194. Vergina, 195. Tsaousitsu, 196. Kastanas, 197. Assiros, 198. Thessaloniki, 199. Olynthos, 200. Sani, 201. Cape Poseidi, 202. Mende, 203. Torone, 204. Koukos, 205. Lagomandra, 206. Kastri, 207. Troy, 208. Methymna, 209. Antissa, 210. Pyrrha, 211. Mytilene, 212. Pitane, 213. Myrina, 214. Kyme, 215. Phokaia, 216. Buruncuk, 217. Sardis, 218. Smyrna, 219. Klazomenai, 220. Teos, 221. Mardagan, 222. Erythrai, 223. Chios, 224. Kato Phana, 225. Emporio, 226. Kolophon, 227. Klaros, 228. Ephesos, 229. Pygela, 230. Panionion, 231. Melia, 232. Pythagoreion, 233. Heraion, 234. Miletos, 235. Didyma, 236. Teichioussa, 237. Iasos, 238. Sinuri, 239. Stratonike, 240. Halikarnassos, 241. Dirmil, 242. Asarlik, 243. Kalymnos, 244. Kos Astypalai, 245. Kos Meropis, 246. Seraglio, 247. Astypalaia, 248. Ialysos, 249. Kamiros, 250. Siana, 251. Exochi, 252. Tzingana, 253. Lindos, 254. Maliona, 255. Ayia Irini, 256. Ypsili, 257. Zagora, 258. Amanakiou, 259. Kardiani, 260. Ktikados, 261. Exobourgo, 262. Galessas, 263. Donousa, 264. Minoa, 265. Naxia, 266. Delion, 267. Paros, 268. Despotiko, 269. Kastro, 270. Hellenikos, 271. Melos, 272. Thera, 273. Modi, 274. Vryses, 275. Khania, 276. Aptara, 277. Khamalevri, 278. Eleutherna, 279. Ayia Triada, 280. Phaistos, 281. Kommos, 282. Kourtes, 283. Gortyn, 284. Prinias, 285. Stavrakia, 286. Phoinikia, 287. Arkhanes, 288. Knossos, 289. Atsalenio, 290. Anopolis, 291. Juktas, 292. Episkopi Pediados, 293. Ayia Paraskeve, 294. Ligortino, 295. Rhytion, 296. Arkades, 297. Psychro, 298. Kritsa, 299. Karphi, 300. Mallia, 301. Milatos, 302. Anaylokhos, 303. Dreros, 304. Vrokastro, 305. Halasmenos, 306. Katalimata, 307. Kavousi, 308. Adhromyloi, 309. Piskokephalo, 310. Vronda, 311. Praisos, 312. Kato

I begin by sketching an overview of early Iron Age Greece, and in the process I point to three critical issues that have plagued its study: (1) the epistemological divide between Aegean prehistory and Classical archaeology (Snodgrass [2006: vi] prefers the dichotomy between ‘archaeology’ and ‘Classical archaeology’); (2) the problem of periodization, which can be taken together with absolute chronology; and

(3) the issue of regionalism within Greece. By pointing to these problems, I also suggest ways to move forward.

From this starting point, I discuss four critical developments in the history of Greece during the early Iron Age. These are not monolithic, nor are they static. Above all they are interrelated and easily collapse into one another; they are not juxtaposed. The first emerges precisely in this period of experimentation and follows a pattern already established in the Bronze Age. The contrast between palatial and non-palatial Greece in the Bronze Age mirrors the contrast, in the early Iron Age, between the Greek *polis*, on the one hand, and the *polis*-less tribal states based on kinship, on the other (see Hall 2007a: 49–53, on *polis* and *ethnos*). Although this contrast becomes most marked in the Archaic period and later, its origins are firmly rooted in the early Iron Age and the collapse of Mycenaean palatial society.

The second important development is Greeks leaving Greece, well articulated in Purcell's (1990) model of mobility and fluid boundaries. This movement has important ramifications for Mediterranean history. Greek overseas mobility and settlement has to be seen together with similar movements by other Mediterranean peoples, especially the Phoenicians (S. Morris 1992), because this movement acts as a catalyst for all sorts of developments in the Mediterranean.

My third issue harks back to the second: it is the quest for metals, the very commodities that define our periodization (Bronze Age, Iron Age). But I want to move beyond the issue of technological innovation, especially the reasons behind the adoption and use of iron, or the vicissitudes of supply or the mechanics of regional networks for the procurement of metals. Rather, I focus on what I see as a real search for structuring commodities of value that ultimately leads to an economic system of exchange that is not limited to elites. Iron and bronze play a significant role, but just as important, perhaps more so, is the often-overlooked metal of the early Iron Age: silver. The culmination of this development is the invention of coinage, an innovation with global

consequences. Although coinage first occurs in the context of Lydia and east Greece during the course of the later seventh century BC, and takes off to breathtaking heights among the Greek city-states in the sixth century BC, the search for structured commodities of value goes back to the early Iron Age.

The fourth great early Iron Age innovation represents no less of a revolution: literacy. It is not just the adoption of the Phoenician alphabet or of a technology of writing that is important, but rather the introduction of alphabetic writing to the unique cultural context of early Iron Age Greece.

From this, it will be clear that I stray from conventional chronological confines, casting a constant glance back to the Bronze Age, as well as a look forward to the sixth century BC and beyond. I do so in an attempt to break down the divide – the ‘iron curtain’ – between Aegean prehistory and Classical archaeology, and to see history as a continuum.

Sketching the Greek Early Iron Age

The Emergence of Iron and a Scholarly Systemic Divide

Conventionally, the early Iron Age in Greece extends from the demise of Mycenaean culture (traditionally sometime after 1200 BC: Desborough 1964; Dickinson 2006: 58–61) to the rise of Archaic Greece (ca. 700 BC: Snodgrass 1980; Hall 2007b; Shapiro 2007). Part of this period has attracted the pejorative term ‘dark age’ (Papadopoulos 1996). For some scholars, the dark age encompasses the entire era of illiteracy, whereas others allocate it a shorter time span, specifically the earlier part of the period, viewing the later early Iron Age, or Geometric period, as a time of recovery. There is a good deal of consensus that the eighth century BC heralds a virtual ‘renaissance’ in Aegean culture (Snodgrass 1977; Hägg 1983), although this may obscure as much as it reveals (Langdon 2008: 292–97).

In traditional scholarship, the early Iron Age has formed

something of an interlude between two comparatively well-explored cultural phases: the earlier, Mycenaean, characterized by a syllabic script (Linear B) used to record numerous, centrally administered, transactions; the later corresponding to the adoption and adaptation, by the Greeks, of the Phoenician (or Aramaic) alphabet sometime in the eighth century BC (Sass 2005). The study of the period between these two proto-literary poles is colored by the fact that it is viewed as both a beginning and an end of two scholarly traditions (Classical archaeology and Aegean prehistory), thus forming an epistemological divide. For Classical archaeologists, the early Iron Age signifies the beginning of something distinctly ‘Greek’ or ‘Hellenic,’ although the decipherment of Linear B should have revolutionized the teaching of early Greek history (S. Morris 2007: 59–60). For Aegean prehistorians, the destruction of the great Bronze Age palaces and the advent of iron (Wertime and Muhly 1980) represent a convenient, if artificial, stopping point. In many ways, this divide mirrors a more fundamental one articulated by Renfrew (1980), one that spirals back to the educational underpinnings of the West (e.g., Morris 1994; Marchand 1996), with the additional divides of ‘history and prehistory’ and ‘history and archaeology’ brought to the fore by Morris (1994: 14–15).

The fact that an era designated as a ‘dark age’ is ushered in by a technological innovation as evidently singular as the widespread use of iron in the Greek mainland is, in itself, important. But why iron, and why now? For a time, the so-called ‘circulation model’ prevailed (Snodgrass 1989), whereby in the eleventh and tenth centuries BC copper and tin, together with scrap bronze, were in short supply. This straightforward economic factor led to the adoption of iron, and is in keeping with the historical accounts of the troubled times in the eastern Mediterranean after 1200 BC. Others, most notably Morris (1989), contended that the supply and demand of bronze were not the issue, but rather that iron had suddenly acquired a new prestige that made it the metal of choice for deposition in graves; this, in turn, gave rise to the ‘deposition model.’

There is, however, much to commend both models. For example, early Iron Age burials, such as the celebrated ‘warrior grave’ in the Athenian Agora published by Blegen (1952) (Figure 10.2a and b) – equipped with a panoply of iron weapons (Figure 10.3) – can serve as a ‘poster boy’ for the deposition model (the burial contained the cremated remains of an adult male aged 35–45 years at death). Similarly, Snodgrass’s economic arguments are cogent, not least that the apparent intensity of the drive to improve the hardness of iron, both in Greece and Cyprus, points to economic necessity as a driving force, placing ‘practical considerations above prestige, function above display’ (Snodgrass 2006: 127). Moreover, iron ore, in its various forms, occurs too widely in Greece for it to be controlled or rationed, as the deposition model requires. Another point stressed by Snodgrass (2006: 127) is the evidence of Hesiod (*Works and Days*, 492–94), where ironworking in the smithy was not only a public activity, but evidently commonplace. Photos-Jones (pers. comm.) would go further, arguing that ironworking had become a more or less domestic activity, something that was part and parcel of a successful subsistence strategy.

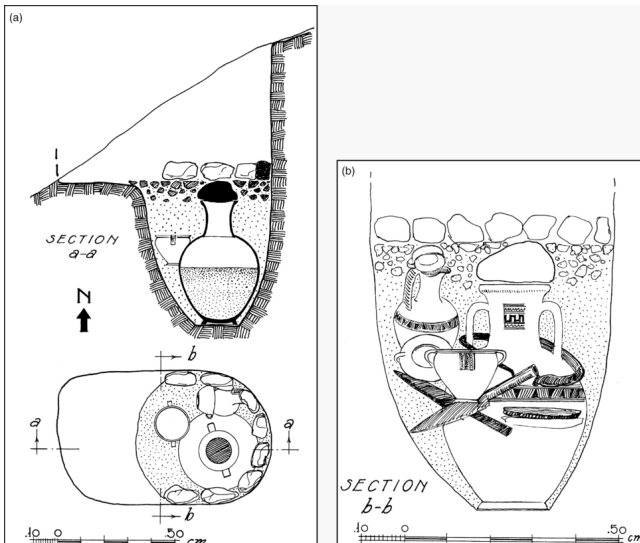


Figure 10.2. Athenian Agora Tomb 13 (Deposit D 16:4). Athenian trench-and-hole urn cremation, after Blegen (1952:

In the same way that copper and tin, together with so many other commodities, were circulated in the international markets of the Late Bronze Age, to which the Uluburun shipwreck bears elegant witness (Pulak 1998; 2001; 2008; see also Sherratt 2000), so too were metals traded and circulated in the exchange systems that emerged in the early Iron Age, as the evidence of Homer attests (Morris and Powell 1997). For instance, in the *Odyssey* (1.180–85, cf. 1.105, 417), the ‘oar-loving Taphians’ sail across the wine-dark sea to the land of men of strange speech in order to trade shining iron for copper. Their specific target was Temessa, on the Tyrrhenian coast of south Italy (Papadopoulos 2001: 447). The collected deeds of the Taphian pirates, and of their individual princes, such as Mentès, read like a virtual primer for a new breed of Late Bronze and early Iron Age entrepreneur. In addition to trading metals, they were involved in the exchange of another valuable commodity: human slaves. In *Odyssey* (14.449–52), Odysseus’s swineherd Eumaios was able to buy Mesaulios from the Taphians, and in the *Odyssey* (15.427–29), the same Taphians seized from Sidon a Phoenician girl, the daughter of Arybas. Elsewhere (*Odyssey* 16.425–30), the Taphians raid the Thresprotians. The adventures of these western Greeks span the eastern and central Mediterranean, from the Levantine coast to the shores of the Tyrrhenian Sea, and bear witness to the reality of long-distance exchange of commodities, people, and ideas in the early Iron Age.

Deposition of commodities in early Iron Age tombs, however, is only part of the story. Some scholars have emphasized the economics of dedications at Greek sanctuaries (Snodgrass 1989–90), others the importance of sanctuaries in the deposition and public display of valued commodities and exotica, including diplomatic gifts, or foreign prizes for victors, whether in sanctuaries or at funeral games, or as goods accumulated by wandering heroes (de Polignac 1984; Langdon 1987). Another scenario sees gift-exchanges between rulers directly with deities, not always between elites (Muscarella 1989). Indeed, prominent rulers of later periods, such as Midas or Kroisos, lavished gifts on sanctuaries such as Delphi and Ephesos. Such

behavior arguably took more valuable commodities out of circulation than did the deposition of material in tombs.

The transition from bronze to iron is most visible in the sphere where it mattered most: warfare. For example, a new type of sword, long referred to as the *Griffzungenschwert* or Naue Type II, was fashioned in such a way that one could both cut and thrust with them (Snodgrass 1967: 28–29; Desborough 1972: 308; Molloy 2005; 2010: 421–22). Snodgrass notes that this was a new and more efficient type of sword, developed in bronze during the Late Bronze Age, standardized and mass-produced to a degree not before achieved in Greece, distributed over an extraordinarily wide range of space and time, and one that lived on, translated into iron, well after the Bronze Age. Indeed, after the eleventh century BC, this type is usually found in iron, such as the example from the Athenian warrior grave (Figure 10.3). Here, there is continuity across the iron curtain in terms of type but not material.

The same is true for other types of objects that are now manufactured in both bronze and iron, including *fibulae* and dress pins, which were worn and circulated in life, and often deposited with the dead. The important point is that although iron is now increasingly used for all sorts of things, bronze does not disappear: it was still a valued commodity, both circulated and intentionally deposited. In certain contexts, such as sanctuaries, bronze dedications far outnumber iron votives (e.g., Voyatzis 1990).

The transition from the Bronze to early Iron Age did not involve a full-scale transition from bronze to iron. Perhaps the best way of moving beyond the problems posed by the epistemological divide between Aegean prehistory and Classical archaeology is to tackle the issue of periodization, together with that of absolute chronology. Periodization matters. We cannot do without it, but we need to be careful how we construct it (Morris 1997; Papadopoulos *et al.* 2011).

Periodization and Absolute Chronology

The relative chronology of the early Iron Age is based on painted pottery, the most abundantly preserved item of material culture that has been subjected to closest scrutiny (Desborough 1952; 1972; Lemos 2002; Coldstream 2009). The period as a whole has been linked strongly to the various successive pottery styles of the Aegean early Iron Age: 'Final Mycenaean' or 'Submycenaean,' Protogeometric (Desborough 1952; Lemos 2002), and Geometric (Coldstream 2009). Pottery style, however, is a misleading indicator of social change, and the vicissitudes of ceramic history should never be confused with social, political, or economic developments. For many scholars, the minutiae of ceramic development often take precedence over more critical economic, social, and political developments.

The translation of relative chronology into absolute terms continues to exercise scholars and has generated a good deal of controversy and revision. The flattening out of the radiocarbon calibration curve between ca. 800–400 BC, and the lack of substantial timber samples for dendrochronology, have left the absolute chronology of the Aegean early Iron Age dependent on more traditional approaches, relying on synchronisms with the various cultures of the Mediterranean and beyond. The establishment of the absolute chronology is largely based on contexts where artifacts, usually pottery, can be connected with recorded historical events. The only such events in the Greek world are the foundation dates, extracted from Thucydides and later authors, of Greek settlements in Sicily and south Italy. The validity of these dates and their historicity has been questioned (Hall 2008); they are limited to the closing stages of the period (mid-eighth century BC and later), and there is no guarantee that pottery found at particular sites coincides with the literary foundation dates for those colonies.

In the east, early Iron Age Greek pottery is more abundant in stratified contexts at various sites in north Syria, Cilicia, and Palestine (especially Al Mina, Tell Sukas, Tabbat-al-Hammam, Tarsus, Tell Abu Hawam, Megiddo, and Samaria), but the historical interpretation of these contexts has led to disagreement (Forsberg 1995; Fantalkin 2001). The most

comprehensive overview of Greek pottery in the east is Fantalkin's (2008) PhD dissertation, which deals with Greek pottery in the southern Levant from the Protogeometric period to the beginning of the Persian period. The earliest post-Bronze Age imported Greek pot to the Levant is now the small fragment of an Argive 'Submycenaean' one-handled cup rather than *skyphos* from Tell es-Safi/Gath in Philistia (Maier *et al.* 2009).

In addition, a number of contexts, mostly tombs, especially in Crete, the Dodecanese, and Cyprus, have yielded large groups of pottery of various Greek and Cypriot local styles that has permitted the cross-linking of Greek and Cypriot material (e.g., tomb A1K1 in Orthi Petra at Eleutherna; Kotsonas 2008); in turn, evidence for Near Eastern imports to the Aegean, particularly Crete, has been growing steadily (Hoffman 1997). Although potentially significant, the quantity of Egyptian objects, particularly items inscribed with regnal dates of pharaohs and found in good contexts with Greek material, is limited (Skon-Jedele 1994).

Despite the problems, the essential lines of Aegean absolute chronology during the later Bronze and early Iron Age are fixed with reasonable clarity, despite a number of concerted challenges (e.g., James *et al.* 1991, whose down-dating the end of the Bronze Age to ca. 950 BC cannot be maintained because of both radiocarbon dates and dendrochronology). A recent dendrodate from Assiros Toumba, proposing that the beginning of Protogeometric should be 1120 BC (Newton *et al.* 2003: 185), has been shown to be a victim of the 'old wood' effect: it cannot be used for absolute chronology (Weninger and Jung 2009: 374–80).

A more ambitious attempt to synchronize the Greek dates with Italian and Swiss dates has provided interesting results (Weninger and Jung 2009; see also Bartoloni and Delpino 2005; Jung 2006; Papadopoulos *et al.* 2011). Good dendrochronological dates from the lakeside settlements on the shores of the Swiss and southern German lakes (e.g., Hauterive-Champréveyres at Lake Neuchâtel) provide important eleventh-century BC *termini post quem*. These

dates, however, cannot at present be linked directly to the Aegean, and the only recourse is to triangulate via Italy (Weninger and Jung 2009: 389–93). Despite difficulties, Weninger and Jung (2009: 416, fig. 14) propose that Late Helladic IIIC be dated to 1100–1095/80, Submycenaean to 1085/80–1070/40 BC, and Early Protogeometric to 1070/40–1000 BC. This chronology – the earlier stages of which are also synchronized with material and events at the Syrian coastal sites of Ugarit and Tell Kazel, as well as Amurru and the Medinet Habu inscriptions of Ramesses III in Egypt – is in broad agreement with the conventional chronology, particularly for the earliest stages of the Aegean early Iron Age.

In order to put the absolute chronology of the Aegean on a firm footing, some have recommended a concerted research program directed at establishing a Holocene radiocarbon-age calibration based on a continuous sequence of annual samples. Others have recommended a program aimed at dating human bone collagen from Mycenaean and early Iron Age burials from different parts of the Greek world. If recent work on dating fired ceramics using rehydroxylation kinetics proves to be as accurate as it currently appears to be (Wilson *et al.* 2009), then the future promises a powerful and nondestructive avenue for establishing the absolute chronology of all periods of Greek archaeology independent of radiocarbon dating (for the most recent overview of radiocarbon dates in the Aegean based on Lefkandi, Kalapodi, and Corinth, see Toffolo *et al.* 2013).

With the beginning of the early Iron Age in Greece placed in the eleventh century BC, and probably in the earlier half of that century, there is little clear evidence in Greece during the ensuing Geometric period that provides conclusive evidence for absolute chronology. For this, we can only look to the east. A remarkably large number of radiocarbon samples from various sites (e.g., Beth Shean, Dor, Khirbet en-Nahas, Megiddo, Tel Hadar, and Tel Rehov) have provided what seems to be a robust sequence for the southern Levant, especially for the critical period of transition from the Iron I–II periods. Several of these sites

have produced growing, but never substantial, quantities of Greek pottery. Despite the large number of radiocarbon samples analyzed, two schools of interpretation have emerged (Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2008; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2009; both with references), and the evidence to date is simply not good enough to bear on the broader issue of the date ranges of the particular phases of the Greek early Iron Age. For this, we can only look to the future, and the hope of more Greek imported material in good eastern contexts.

Thus far, I have presented nothing that is not in keeping with the conventional chronology of the early Iron Age Aegean. The one area where there is need for reconsideration is the terminal date of Late Geometric. The evidence for this derives from an analysis of what is arguably the largest group of non-funerary early Iron Age contexts anywhere in the Greek world: the numerous wells from the area of the Athenian Agora (Papadopoulos 2003). This is not the place to present the argument in detail. If the Agora deposits are regarded as representative and not an accident of survival or preservation, and if we keep the absolute chronology precisely as it is but lower the terminal date of Late Geometric from 700 down to 670 or even 650 BC, then many of the problems disappear. But can we lower the date of Late Geometric without violating our carefully constructed chronological scheme? Once it is clear that the Thucydidean dates for the western colonies are problematic, as Hall (2008: 409) has shown, and since any reexamination of the literary and archaeological evidence for the supposed destructions of Near Eastern sites suggests that our earlier confidence in these 'fixed points' may have been misplaced (Forsberg 1995), then there is little left to anchor the terminal date of Late Geometric in absolute time. As we have seen, radiocarbon cannot come to the rescue due to the flattening of the calibration curve.

If the Late Geometric period is assigned more absolute time by extending its terminal date into the seventh century BC, then graves and population would not be so heavily concentrated in the second half of the eighth century, and

the seventh century BC would lose much of its problematic status (e.g., Camp 1979; Morris 1987; Osborne 1989). Such a down-dating does *not* result in an accordion effect; all it does is shrink Protoattic into a shorter period of time. By the second half of the seventh century BC, we return to the conventional chronology. As we will see, this chronology fits well the era of Greek colonization.

A Diachronic Perspective

Diachronically, the traditional view of the early Iron Age in Greece has been one of decline (twelfth and earlier eleventh centuries BC), followed by isolation (later eleventh and tenth centuries BC), then the beginnings of recovery (late tenth to early eighth centuries BC), culminating in the ‘Greek renaissance’ (mid-to-late eighth century BC). Such an overview, however, lacks explanatory power. Explaining the demise of a culture as archaeologically visible as the Mycenaean has led to much debate. The two most popular scenarios involve an invasion(s) conventionally linked with the erstwhile Dorians (for which, see Schnapp-Gourbeillon 2002: 74–83), themselves loosely pinned onto the later literary tradition of the return of the Herakleidai; the other, a ‘social uprising’ (also linked with a Dorian ‘substratum’ of Mycenaean society: Taylour 1964: 86; Snodgrass 1971: 186–87, 385). The latter was championed by Hooker (1976: 179), who suggested that the indigenous ‘Helladic’ substratum of Mycenaean society not only forcibly deposed their Mycenaean masters, but also consciously returned to their ancestral customs of individual inhumation in cist and pit graves.

The Dorian invasion/migration has dissolved into a scholarly mirage (Schnapp-Gourbeillon 2002: 131–82). In contrast, internal collapse remains an under-emphasized explanation, as does ‘Balkanization’ (i.e., internal conflict between the various Mycenaean states competing over diminishing resources). Another line of reasoning argues that the Mycenaean polities were ‘Potemkin palaces,’ and that once the long-distance route-based economies of the eastern Mediterranean were disrupted, the economic

underpinnings of the Mycenaean palatial system collapsed (Sherratt 2001).

The twelfth century BC is certainly a period of upheaval, witnessing movements of peoples not only in Greece but throughout the entire eastern Mediterranean (Sandars 1978; Oren 2000; Yasur-Landau 2010). Whatever the causes of the demise of Mycenaean culture, there is a significant shift in the nature of occupation and in subsistence strategies in Greece during the later twelfth and eleventh centuries BC, largely defined by a less ordered political landscape. The centrally administered palace economies of the second millennium BC gave way to more dispersed forms of economic organization. This new Iron Age pattern did not rise suddenly out of the ashes of Mycenaean bureaucracies, but had already begun to take shape long before 1000 BC, contributing to the processes underlying the disappearance of the Bronze Age centers.

Against such a backdrop one aspect often overlooked is: how Mycenaean is Late Helladic (LH) IIIC? On account of the systemic divide between Aegean prehistory and Classical archaeology, we have come to view LH IIIC as 'Mycenaean,' even though it is Postpalatial. Since LH IIIC is Postpalatial, there is a strong argument for attaching LH IIIC to Protogeometric rather than to the earlier palatial periods, and to regard developments in LH IIIC as contributing to the social, economic, and political trajectory that ultimately led to the rise of the Greek city-states, *before* any putative dark age. For many scholars, the ceramic transition from Late Mycenaean to Early Protogeometric is more important than the transition from Palatial to Postpalatial. Greater emphasis should therefore be placed on the importance of LH IIIC as a critical period in the development of the early Iron Age. One result of recasting the way we think of our periodization would be that there is far more continuity from LH IIIC through the early Iron Age and into the Archaic period than is currently conceded. Another, arguably more important, result would allow the collapse of the Mycenaean way of life as a major factor contributing more directly to the political experiments that were to follow.

Regionality

In the same manner that periodization affects the way we conceive of the Greek early Iron Age, so too does the process of carving up the various regions of Greece into broader entities. Just as periodization has been largely determined and defined by painted pottery, so too has regionality. So far as the traditional picture of the early Iron Age is concerned, there is a good deal of regional variation within the Greek world. Nevertheless, although various aspects of material culture play into this (metalwork, burial customs, what survives of architecture), pottery looms largest.

Coldstream (2009) and others sketched out the regional divisions of Greece based on early Iron Age pottery. Significantly, these various regional entities do not always accord with other ways of determining regions, such as the distribution of the later Greek dialects (Jeffery 1990). Epichoric script helped to define the spread of literacy and to harden linguistic units that contributed to a more explicit definition of Archaic territorial polities and identities, but these are rarely the same as ceramic units.

Hand in hand with ‘ceramic regions’ is the idea of the ceramic *koine* – but how relevant is a *koine* based on painted pottery? Many scholars have spoken, for example, of a Euboean or Athenian *koine* (e.g., Lemos 2002: 212–17). These are, however, ceramic, not political *koinai*. An early Iron Age Euboean *koine* is about as relevant as an Athenian (red-figure) *koine* in the Classical period: it means very little. Athenian red-figure pottery was closely copied in many centers (Corinth, Ambrakia, Chalkidike, and in Apulia, Lucania, Paestum, Campania, Sicily), but does such a *koine* make sense outside the narrow confines of pottery production?

Another effect of these ceramic *koinai* is that whole swaths of Greece are subsumed under the orbit of other regions solely on the basis of pottery. A classic case in point is Boiotia, which is sometimes seen as being part of the orbit of Attica, sometimes subsumed under that of Euboea. There is, to date, no palatial center on Euboea, whereas the

importance of Thebes in the Late Bronze Age cannot be underestimated. Latacz (2004: 242–43), among others, persuasively argues that Thebes was the seat of the ruler of *Ahhijawa*, adding: ‘Should the Thebes hypothesis prove to be true, then *inter alia* ... the old problem of why it has to be that the catalogue of ships [Homer, *Iliad* 2.494–759] begins with Boiotia and the Theban region and why the fleet assembled at Aulis is at once explained: Thebes dominated Mycenaean Greece at the time, and Aulis ... had always been the natural harbor of Thebes.’ Indeed, the collapse of the Mycenaean palatial center at Thebes might well provide the impetus for a more fragmented but independent network of settlements in LH IIIC, a pattern that was to continue throughout the early Iron Age.

Four Critical Developments of the Greek Early Iron Age

Palatial versus Non-Palatial – Polis versus Polis-less Tribal States (*Ethne*)

By the closing stages of the early Iron Age, much if not all of the southern Balkan peninsula was composed of two very different types of social and political forms of organization. As Hall (2007a: 49) elaborates, ‘Conventionally, a distinction has been drawn between the *polis* and the *ethnos* – a looser type of political organization associated above all with regions such as Achaia, Elis, Aitolia, Akarnania, Thessaly, and Makedonia.’ I would extend this area to cover Epirus, Illyria, and much of the rest of the Balkan peninsula. Various Classical authors – not least Thucydides (1.5, 1.10, 3.94), Herodotus (5.98; cf. 1.96), and Aristotle (*Poetica* 1448a.36; *Politica* 1261a.28) – state that unwallled villages, referred to as *komai*, were characteristic of an *ethnos*. Hammond (2000: 345) has argued that the term *ethnos* in the Greek sources denotes a tribal state based on kinship, and Hall (2007a: 49–53) reviews the various meanings of the term *ethnos*, drawing a distinction between consolidated *ethne* and dispersed *ethne*. Perhaps the best examples of

excavated *komai* are those of Epirus, particularly Vitsa and Liatovouni (Vokotopoulou 1986; Douzougli and Papadopoulos 2010). These settlements are certainly small, unfortified, and sometimes at relatively high elevations.

A further distinction between *poleis* and *komai* is that the latter relied more heavily on specialized pastoralism. In a number of important independent studies, Halstead (1990) and Cherry (1988) challenged the prevailing view that the mountain environment and pan-Balkan affinities of the material culture of the Pindos indicated transhumant or nomadic pastoralism. Rather, they interpreted the evidence in terms of sedentary mixed farming, replicating for the early Iron Age the subsistence strategy that dominated the lowlands of Greece throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Age, further noting that this pattern does not preclude seasonal use of distant pastures.

In attempting to understand why pastoral nomadism has been so widely assumed as the dominant economic model in the study of early Iron Age Greece, Cherry (1988: 29), following Shaw (1982–83), concluded: ‘From Homer to Ammianus Marcellinus, the pastoralist is defined simply via logical opposition to the essential criteria of civilization: mobile and without established homes, non-urban, *polis*-less, without properly constituted rules or law-codes, lazy and parasitic (because he does not *work* the land and *harvest* crops, like the farmer), an eater of meat (often *raw* flesh, and even raw *human* flesh) rather than grain, and a drinker of milk, not wine. By a confused social syllogism, nomadic pastoralism comes to bear the full stigma of uncivilized barbarity.’

The distinction between the *polis* and the *ethnos* in the Archaic period, I would argue, has a Bronze Age ancestry in the distinction between the palatial and non-palatial polities. Such a distinction extends beyond tracing the ‘borders’ of the Mycenaean world. Among the *ethne* enumerated by Hall, Achaia and Elis, in the Peloponnese, the heart of Mycenaean Greece, together with Aitolia, Akarnania, and Macedonia, never boasted a Mycenaean ‘palace,’ and even in Thessaly, the only palatial center is at Iolkos (equated with the site of

Dimini; Pantou 2010), whereas northern and western Thessaly display a very different material record. The passage from a tribal to a state society in early Greece is often regarded as an old problem, but I am not convinced that such a straightforward linear development was the case.

The political pattern that emerged in the Late Bronze Age between palatial and non-palatial was to continue, albeit much altered, in the early Iron Age, surviving the collapse of the Mycenaean world in an unpredictable and overlooked manner. The distinction between palatial and non-palatial mirrors that between the *polis* and the *polis*-less *ethne*. This distinction, clearly visible in the Archaic and Classical periods, was to have enormous ramifications in later history.

Mobility: Greek Overseas Travel and Settlement

Osborne (1998) has noted that ‘colonization’ is, first and foremost, a literary event, and Purcell (1997: 501) has stated, ‘the reference of “Greek colonization” as a meaningful term can only be to the concepts of the literary tradition ... “Greek colonization” is as dead as Bronze Age matriarchy.’ A number of scholars have come to view the process of the foundation of any Greek foreign settlement not as a *foundation d’une colonie*, but rather as a *formation d’une polis d’outre-mer* (Luraghi 1996). The phenomenon of Greeks traveling and settling overseas is not a unified movement that can be reduced to simple factors. It is a complex and interwoven story of multiple diasporas in the Mediterranean and Black Seas that should not be seen solely in the light of other colonizations, particularly European colonizations from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries AD (Purcell 1997). Moreover, it is not just a Greek phenomenon, but a broader Mediterranean one. Most of the earliest overseas settlements – such as Pithekoussai – are not exclusively Greek, but involve Phoenicians, North Syrians, Etruscans, and others. Such a reality raises many issues, primary among which are *local* continuities of exchange networks and nodes. Also at play are scholarly agendas, what Dietler (2005) has effectively called the colonization of

archaeology.

At the same time, it is important to stress, as Horden and Purcell (2000: 286) have done, that there is ‘no reason to seek special (and, still less, apologetic) explanations [for the overseas settlement of so many Greeks in the Archaic period], any more than for Athenian cleruchies, Roman *coloniae*, or Venetian and Genoese settlements in the later Middle Ages. The establishment of cash-crop production in the landscape of the Hellenic overseas settlement is one of the more radical and intrusive dislocations in Mediterranean agrarian history.’ Such a dislocation in the Mediterranean and Black Seas is perhaps most conspicuously visible archaeologically at Metapontion and, in the context of Greek tradition, best encapsulated in the fabulous stories of agricultural success at Sybaris.

Chronologically, Greek overseas settlements in the Mediterranean are usually considered to be a historical phenomenon of the later eighth to sixth centuries BC, and primarily after 700 BC in the Black Sea; our textual sources go back no further. In material terms, however, the story of Greek mobility overseas is one with a venerable Bronze Age ancestry that transcends recorded history by centuries. Indeed, the distribution of Archaic pottery is remarkably close to that of Mycenaean pottery. To be sure, the names of sites in the west where Mycenaean and Archaic pottery has been found are usually different but very close to one another: prehistoric Broglio de Trebisacce and Torre del Mordillo instead of historic Sybaris and its extramural sanctuary at Francavilla Marittima; Termitito rather than Metaponto or Siris; Scoglio del Tonno in place of Taras; Polla instead of Sala Consilina; Vivara in the Bay of Naples rather than Pithekoussai, Kyme, or Neapolis; Molinello, Matrensa, Cozzo del Pantano, and Pantalica in Sicily instead of Megara Hyblaia, Syrakousai, Gela, and Leontinoi (Papadopoulos 2001: 439–41, figs 41 and 42). Different also are the names of the scholars who study Mycenaean and Archaic/Classical Greek pottery in Greece and Italy. The important point is that the archaeological pattern seen in the Archaic period mirrors one already in place in the Bronze

Age.

The first western Greeks were Mycenaeans. In his seminal study of Mycenaean pottery in Italy and adjacent areas, Taylour (1958) listed some 17 sites in peninsular Italy, Sicily, and the Lipari and Bay of Naples islands that yielded Mycenaean pottery; Vagnetti (1999) expanded the list to 78. The quest for metals has been rightly emphasized as a motive for Mycenaean contacts in the west (Bietti Sestieri 1988; see also Gras 1985: 57–97), but the distribution of Mycenaean pottery cannot be linked solely to metallurgy. Moreover, Mycenaean interests are rarely seen against the backdrop of later Greek interests, including settlement, in Italy and Sicily. What happens in the Bronze Age is often presented as a Mycenaean prologue, a sort of pre-proto-colonization (Ridgway 1992: 3–8; Malkin 1998: 10–14). Taylour (1958: 128–31), however, already postulated the existence of a Mycenaean ‘colony’ at Scoglio del Tonno. The impetus behind this settlement was trade, a familiar story for a site next to historic Taras and in control of one of the finest harbors in all of southern Italy. Here, the primary commodity noted by Taylour was not metals, but *Murex trunculus*, the source of purple dye and, hence, textile production, a story also familiar in a Canaanite/Phoenician context.

Although Taylour’s hypothesis of a Rhodian colony was challenged, his lead forced students of the Italian and Aegean Late Bronze Age to look more carefully at the material record. Among other things, the pattern of the distribution of pottery, both Mycenaean and Archaic, and that in between, does not *a priori* point to colonial movement. For example, one of the most common types of early Iron Age pottery in the west, the Thapsos class, probably made at the Corinthian colony of Ambrakia, does not follow colonial movement, as there are no Ambrakian colonies in Italy (the only Corinthian colony in south Italy and Sicily is Syrakousai i.e., Syracuse). The evidence underscores a different type of movement of commodities, people, and ideas. As Osborne (1998: 268–69) reminds us, it is a far more complex reality than just ‘trade before the flag.’

Structuring Value through Metals

It is important to return to metal, but to move beyond bronze and iron and focus on the commodity that was to become in the early Iron Age, as it had been in the Late Bronze Age, *the* measure of value: silver. As Wallace (1987: 396–97) has argued, long before coins were ever introduced, the three basic functions of money – a standard measure of value, a means of exchange, and a means of storing surplus wealth – had been filled by various other materials, including silver bullion. In Egypt and the Near East, weighed silver, in whatever form, was used as currency well before and after the introduction of silver coinage in Greece (Schaps 2004), with standard Mesopotamian units of weight such as the *shekel* and *mina* widespread throughout the Mediterranean (Wallace 1987; J. Williams 1997: 16–23; Schaps 2004: 34–62). In their choice of silver as the metal for the earliest coinage, the Greeks of the Archaic period followed a tradition well established in the eastern Mediterranean in the Late Bronze Age. Once again, this was not just a Greek phenomenon, for silver features prominently in Phoenician activity in Spain and the western and central Mediterranean (Bartoloni 2009). The Río Tinto has been mined for copper, silver, gold, and other minerals by Iberians, Tartessians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Visigoths, Moors, and, most recently, the Spanish government. Silver was another of those things that the Greeks adopted and adapted from the Near East, but once they took possession of it, they transformed it in unpredictable ways.

Conceptually, a kind of coined metal involving some form of stamping may have existed in the Levant prior to the traditional invention of coinage by the Lydians and east Greeks around 600 BC, in the form of seals affixed to bundles of weighed metal (Thompson 2003). Although this idea of sealing for weight and purity verification was widely practiced in the ancient Near East, stamping a clay sealing on a cloth bundle containing a pre-measured amount of silver is *not* the same as stamping the silver itself. As Schaps (2004: 49) stresses, ‘The silver of the Near East had never

been coined; it was weighed at each transaction, and the scale was an essential accessory to every sale.' This difference is amplified by the fact that once the Lydians and Greeks began striking true coins, and the coins became widely available and hoarded in the ancient Near East, there was resistance to coinage in the Phoenician homeland and the Syro-Palestinian sphere more generally, as well as in Egypt.

As for the earliest true coins, Herodotus (1.94) clearly states that the Lydians were the first to use gold and silver coinage (*nomisma*). The earliest coins were made of electrum, a naturally occurring mixture of gold and silver, in Lydia, sometime near the end of the seventh century, perhaps as late as ca. 600 BC. What is interesting about these earliest coins is that they were more akin to gifts or medals than true coins (Price 1983: 5–8). This is supported by the size and context of the earliest electrum issues. Their minute size suggests they were not intended to be handled frequently or to circulate widely in long-distance trade, and they are restricted to western Asia Minor. Moreover, unlike later coins, these earliest issues were deposited in sanctuaries, such as the Archaic Temple of Artemis at Ephesos (D. Williams 1991–93). Indeed, such a deposition below a temple suggests that they were buried as religious or votive dedications, or as a foundation deposit, in the same manner as other objects of value were deposited in early Iron Age graves and sanctuaries.

By the middle of the sixth century BC, silver coinage takes over (J. Williams 1997: 25–26). The earliest silver issues came from Lydia, probably in the reign of Kroisos (ca. 560–547 BC), and at about the same time or soon after, Aigina, Athens, and Corinth were among the first Greek city-states to mint silver coinage. But why did the Greeks take that final step, as Kurke (1999: 11) asks, to mint coins at all, particularly as many kingdoms of the Near East and Egypt continued to use weighed silver bullion?

By asking this question, Kurke returns to the fact that coinage must be linked with the *polis*, and she offers an alternative narrative behind the development of various

forms of money in Greece. The issue is cast as ‘an ongoing struggle over the constitution of value and who controlled the highest spheres of exchange, between the traditional elite and the emerging city-state’ (Kurke 1999: 12). Kurke sees the invention of coinage in Greece arising out of the seventh–sixth-century BC crisis of justice and the unfair distribution of property. The idea that the creation of coinage was more political than economic is not new: Finley (1973: 116–19) articulated it, as did others.

In Homer, an interesting pattern of the use of silver emerges in the context of gift exchange between elites. In the *Odyssey* (4.615–19), for example, the guest-gift offered by Menelaos to Telemachos is a mixing bowl of solid silver with a rim of gold, made by Hephaistos himself and given originally to Menelaos by his friend, the king of Sidon. Elsewhere in Homer (*Odyssey* 4.125–26), Helen received as a gift a remarkable silver basket from Alkandre, the wife of Polybos, in Egypt.

The pattern we find in the Late Bronze Age with silver as the primary medium of value and fungibility is largely the same in the early Iron Age. In this post–Bronze Age, less-centralized period of entrepreneurship, the quest for metal – including bronze, iron, gold, and silver, fueled by the reality of Greek overseas mobility – involved regional networks. Local exchange cycles and routes of long-distance trade were determined by active intervention and response, and the Mediterranean as a whole can be seen as a single interacting system. Much depended on input – including maritime expertise and capital – from the east, not least Phoenicia. The input, however, of any advanced economic organization – Greek, Punic, Italian, or other – drew together or affected the fortunes of communities throughout the Mediterranean (Sherratt and Sherratt 1993: 374–75). The early Iron Age Mediterranean was a world of fluid boundaries, where consumption played an important role, the whole functioning as a network, without a center. Although the culmination of this development was the invention of coinage in the later seventh century BC, the real search for structured commodities of value goes back to the Late

Bronze and early Iron Age.

The Literacy Revolution

One of the most important developments of the Greek early Iron Age was the adoption and adaptation of the Phoenician alphabet (Powell 1991). Precisely where and when this happened has been a matter of debate. I present here the schematic language family trees of Naveh (1982: 10) and Sass (2005: 12), as drawn up by the latter (Figure 10.5). As for the *time* of the adoption, the latest would appear to be around 750 BC, a date in keeping with the earliest Greek inscriptions, such as the Dipylon oinochoe (Figure 10.6), as well as the date of Semitic prototypes. As Sass (2005: 145) notes, after the middle of the eighth century BC, several Phoenician and Aramaic letters evolved away from the shapes that served as models for the corresponding Greek letters. Despite Naveh's (1982) strong arguments for the adoption occurring earlier, around 1100 BC, the latest evidence, based primarily on letter forms, would suggest that a date range of ca. 825/800–750 BC can be substantiated reasonably well by the Semitic evidence (Sass 2005: 145).

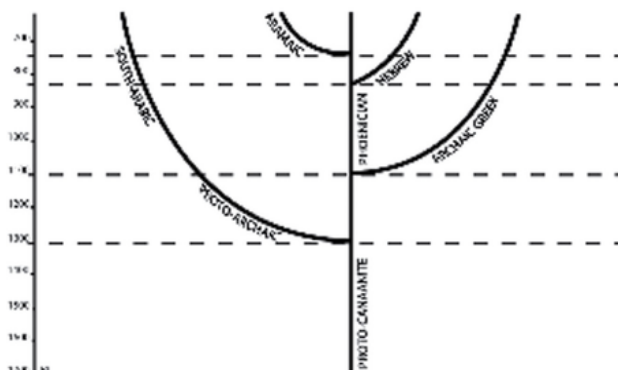
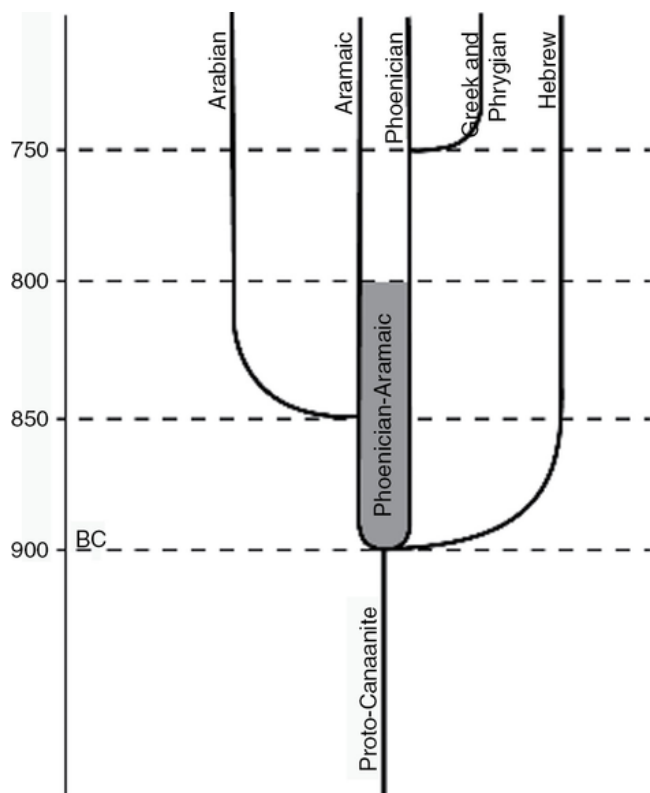


Figure 10.5. Schematic family tree of the early alphabetic scripts (and below, for comparison, the pertinent segment of the tree in Naveh 1982: 10). After Sass (2005: 12) (prepared by Christine Johnston).



Figure 10.6. The Dipylon oinochoe. Athens, National Museum 192 [2074], with the inscription ‘He who, of all the dancers, now performs most daintily.’ Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Athens, NM 4700–4701 (photograph by Eva-Maria Czakó).

The issue of *where* the transmission or adoption occurred is more problematic, in part because there are no fewer than three alternatives for the mother script of Greek: it could have been exclusively Phoenician, or Phoenician/Aramaic, or Phrygian deriving from Phoenician (Sass 2005: 133–52). In all three, the Phoenician alphabet is the lowest common denominator. As for the physical *place* or *places* where the adoption and adaptation took place, several areas in the Mediterranean have been suggested, from Al Mina in the east to Pithekoussai in the west. Cyprus has loomed large in this discussion, especially the Phoenician settlement at Kition, as has Euboea – with eastern inscriptions from Lefkandi and Eretria – and other Aegean islands, including Rhodes and Crete (Powell 1991: 12–18). The problem is well framed by Sass (2005: 149): ‘The fact that at least four different locations for the adoption could be defended so eruditely and with such excellent arguments ... indicates that the evidence presented thus far is perhaps less forthcoming than one would wish.’

If, however, the idea that the mother script of Greek was Phrygian, deriving from Phoenician, is true (see Sass 2005: 146–49), then one should look more to the eastern Aegean and western Asia Minor as the place of adaptation. The overlap of the shared vowel letters in both Phrygian and Greek seems to rule out an adoption independent of one another: ‘Either the Phrygian script was adopted from the Phoenician and subsequently the Greek from the Phrygian, or vice versa’ (Sass 2005: 147). Phrygian or Greek precedence, however, relies on absolute chronology that, as we have seen, is a thorny issue. There is certainly no inkling of *Phrygia grammata* in the Greek tradition, in contrast to *Kadmeia grammata*. Whatever date Herodotus had in mind, he does mince his words:

The Phoenicians who came with Kadmos ... introduced into Greece, after their settlement in the country, a number of accomplishments, of which the most important was writing, an art till then, I think, unknown to the Greeks. (Herodotus 5.58; translated by Aubrey de Sélincourt)

For Herodotus, the place of transmission was mainland Greece, directly from Phoenicians. What is clear is that we simply do not have sufficient evidence to clinch the issue of the place(s) where the adoption happened. But wherever it occurred, the critical issue is that the alphabet was introduced, in the course of the early Iron Age, to the specific cultural context of Greece, and what the Greeks did with it. For the first time in world history, writing was not limited to a scribal class serving a ruling or religious elite. Writing became a tool that could be exploited by anyone. Henceforth, a bard could reach across centuries to relate a real or imagined world of heroes, a woman could write poetry, a farmer could write of works and days, even on the birth of gods, a playwright could construct figures of high tragedy or slapstick comedy, a seasoned traveler could recount his journeys and the customs of the peoples he

chanced across, a failed and frustrated general could write a history of a war, and any male citizen could scratch on a potsherd the name of whomever he wished to ostracize.

Coda: A Look to the Future

I want to end with a look ahead and to return to the first of the developments in the early Iron Age discussed above, namely the dichotomy between *polis* and *polis*-less states. In spectacular fashion, Philip II, in the fourth century BC, showed how powerless *poleis* were in the face of his Macedonian, tribal, clan-based, *polis*-less state with central authority. His son, Alexander III, extended his empire from Greece to the frontiers of India, including all of Egypt. In a similar fashion, Pyrrhos of Epirus, in the third century BC, extended his empire from the Peloponnese well into Illyria, before turning his gaze to Sicily and the Italian peninsula. Philip the Macedonian and Pyrrhos the Molossian did much more than build empires; they built cities – *real* cities – ushering in a new form of urbanism. Just at the time when the Macedonian and Epirote *komai* were being abandoned, large cities, such as Pella, were being founded, as was the large theater at Dodona, the former by Philip, the latter by Pyrrhos. This was *synoikismos* at an unprecedented scale.

The Greek *polis*, which was both established and stable, went about as far as it could go. In contrast, what was to become the crucible of Greek political activity were the tribal, clan-based states with central authority. It was they who not only ushered in the Hellenistic age, but also paved the way for a new type of urbanism. At the core of this development lie the processes that took shape in the formative period of the early Iron Age.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to a number of colleagues for sharing their research with me and for providing copies of papers prior to their publication, especially Alexander Fantalkin, Jonathan Hall, Reinhard Jung, Antonis Kotsonas, Aren Maeir, Amihai Mazar, and Effie Photos-Jones. My thanks, too, to Christine

Johnston for preparing the maps (Figures 10.1 and 10.4), and to the editors of this volume for their input.

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11 Before ‘the Gates of Tartessos’: Indigenous Knowledge and Exchange Networks in the Late Bronze Age Far West

Marisa Ruiz-Gálvez

Abstract

After 40 years of research, we have no doubt today that the Phoenicians arrived at Tartessos in the early first millennium BC and that they systematically settled on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar, close to the areas where indigenous exchange already existed. We know that they came to trade rather than to found agricultural colonies, but we still do not know why they decided to go to the fringes of the world. Undertaking such a long and risky journey involved the entire sailing season, meaning they would have had to winter abroad, far from home and among natives that, at worst, might become hostile. This also would have entailed providing a network of points along the route, where sailors could stop for fresh supplies or repairs. Such a network could hardly be improvised on the fly. As silver does not seem to have been extracted in the Iberian Peninsula during the Late Bronze Age, this cannot have been the Phoenicians' intention. To answer these questions, we need to know what the natives' social, ideological and economic situation was prior to Phoenician colonisation, and what advantages or causes made a voyage to the Mediterranean extremes not just feasible, but even thinkable, to the Phoenicians.

Introduction: Posing Problems Rather Than Solving Them

Beginning at the end of the story, the Phoenicians installed themselves in coastal colonies either in the middle of the eighth century BC (by the historical chronology) or by the last quarter of the ninth century BC (according to ^{14}C dating).

Two main and opposing models have typically dominated the interpretation of the Phoenician Archaic colonisation phenomenon. The first one is a Marxist and Polanyian model, which maintains that Phoenician colonisation was an enterprise conducted by the palace of Tyre and Gadir, its representative in the far west, whose main objectives were to disperse the excess population from the Levant, and to exploit the Tartessian territory by acquiring a workforce from the indigenous elites (López Castro 1993: 60; Alvar 2005; González Wagner 2005). The second model, to which I openly adhere, claims that Phoenician Archaic colonisation was first and foremost a commercial enterprise, undertaken by family companies belonging to the Tyrian bourgeoisie close to power, and supported by the palace; that is, it was private trade under state organisation. It was an analogous situation to the Podestà of Genoa or the Doge of Venice in the Middle Ages (Aubet 2001; 2006).

Aubet argues against the agrarian model because most of the ancient colonies lay either on the coast close to the best harbour areas, or on islands and peninsulas (i.e. on politically neutral places) rather than in the interior, controlling the best agricultural land. Furthermore, the material culture of the first colonies is very homogeneous, and clearly reflects the presence of an intrusive eastern population.

So we have a significant amount of Phoenician traders installed on both sides of the Pillars of Herakles at a very early date, according to ^{14}C data (Figure 11.1 and Table 11.1). What, in my view, is far from clear is the reason for their arrival and installation at the very end of the known

world at a time when, apparently, the other Phoenician colonies of the central Mediterranean had not yet been founded.

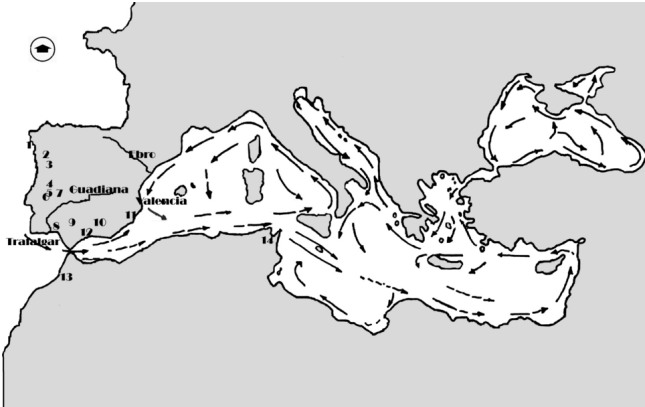


Figure 11.1. Map of sites mentioned in text. 1. Vigo (Galicia, Spain); 2. Baiões (Beira Alta, Portugal); 3. Outerio dos Castelos (Beira Alta, Portugal); 4. Monte do Frade (Beira Baixa, Portugal); 5. Moreirinha (Beira Baixa, Portugal); 6. Monte do Trigo (Beira Baixa, Portugal); 7. Berzocana (Extremadura, Spain); 8. Huelva (Andalucía, Spain); 9. Montoro (Andalucía, Spain); 10. Purullena (Andalucía, Spain); 11. Villena (Comunidad Valenciana, Spain); 12. Morro de Mezquitilla (Andalucía, Spain); 13. Lixus (Morocco); 14. Carthage (Tunisia).

Table 11.1. Radiocarbon dates for Bronze Age sites with wheelmade pottery or iron imports, and first Phoenician colonies.

Site	Cultur context	Sampl	Lab. code	BP years	BC years	Reference
Purullena	Local Bronze Age + wheelmade pottery	Charcoal	GrN 7285	3160 ± 35	505–1323 (95.4%)	Arribas 1976
Purullena	Local Bronze Age	Seed	GrN 7284	3095 ± 35	436–1269 (95.4%)	Arribas 1976

		+ wheelmade pottery				
Montoro	Local	Charcoal	CSIC	3060 ± 60	441–	Martín
	Bronze		795		1129	de la
	Age				(95.4%)	Cruz
		+ wheelmade pottery				1987
Montoro	Local	Charcoal	CSIC	3020 ± 70	126–	Martín
	Bronze		794		1054	de la
	Age				(95.4%)	Cruz
		+ wheelmade pottery				1987
Montoro	Local	Charcoal	CSIC	3020 ± 70	126–	Martín
	Bronze		625		1054	de la
	Age				(95.4%)	Cruz
		+ wheelmade pottery				1987
Montoro	Local	Charcoal	CSIC	2900 ± 50	261–	Martín
	Bronze		624		935	de la
	Age				(95.4%)	Cruz
		+ wheelmade pottery				1987
Monte do Trigo	Local	Charcoal	SAC	3020 ± 60	121–	Vilaça
	Bronze		1458		1057	2006
	Age				(95.4%)	
	layer 2					
	Square					
	8 + faience,					
	weights,					
	bronze					
	tweezers					
	and					
	iron					
	tools					
	and					
	weapons					
Monte do Trigo	Local	Charcoal	SAC	2990 ± 50	387–	Vilaça
	Bronze		1456		1056	2006
	Age				(95.4%)	
	layer 2					

			Square 8 + faience, weights, bronze tweezers and iron tools and weapons			
Monte do Trigo	Local Bronze Age layer 2 Square 8 + faience, weights bronze tweezers and iron tools and weapons	Charcoal SAC 1457		2960 ± 4570– 1021 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Monte do Trigo	Local Bronze Age layer 2 Square 8 + faience, weights, bronze tweezers and iron tools and weapons	Charcoal SAC 1507		2960 ± 4570– 1021 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Monte	Local	Charcoal	C1289	2913 ± 41262–	Vilaça	

do	Bronze			998	2006
Trigo	Age			(95.4%)	
	layer 2				
	Square				
	8 + faience,				
	weights,				
	bronze				
	tweezers				
	and				
	iron				
	tools				
	and				
	weapons				
Monte	Local	Charcoal	SAC	2880 ± 452	Vilaça
do	Bronze		1506	926	2006
Trigo	Age			(95.4%)	
	layer 2				
	Square				
	8 + faience,				
	weights,				
	bronze				
	tweezers				
	and				
	iron				
	tools				
	and				
	weapons				
Monte	Local	Charcoal	SIC	2880 ± 339	Vilaça
do	Bronze		1288	936	2006
Trigo	Age			(95.4%)	
	layer 2				
	Square				
	8 + faience,				
	weights,				
	bronze				
	tweezers				
	and				
	iron				
	tools				
	and				

	weapons						
Outerio dos Castelos Beijós	Local Bronze Age + Several iron	Wood	SaC 1539	2960 ± 45	370–1021 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Outerio dos Castelos Beijós	Local Bronze Age + Several iron	Charcoal	SaC 1566	2930 ± 60	370–939 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Outerio dos Castelos Beijós	Local Bronze Age + First Phoenician imports: double spring <i>fibulae</i>	Charcoal	SaC 1524	2610 ± 60	309–541 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Moreirinha	Local Bronze Age layer 3	Charred wood	ICEN 834	2940 ± 45	296–1011 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Moreirinha	Local Bronze Age layer 3	Charred wood	GrN 19659	2785 ± 15	3002–896 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Moreirinha	Local Bronze Age layer 2 + amber and iron tools and knives	Charred wood	ICEN 835	2910 ± 45	1263–976 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006	
Moreirinha	Local Bronze Age	Charred wood	OXA 4085	2780 ± 70	121–807	Vilaça 2006	

	Age layer 2 + amber and iron tools and knives			(95.4%)	
Monte do Frade	Local Bronze Age + 1 iron knife	Charred wood	ICEN 969	2920 ± 50 293– 949 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006
Monte do Frade	Local Bronze Age + 1 iron knife	Charred wood	ICEN 971	2850 ± 45 92– 902 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006
Monte do Frade	Local Bronze Age + 1 iron knife	Charred wood	GrN 19660	2805 ± 15 04– 913 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006
Monte do Frade	Local Bronze Age + 1 iron knife	Charred wood	ICEN 970	2780 ± 10 58– 792 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006
Baiões	Local Bronze Age + iron chisel cast in bronze	Wood	GrN 7484	2650 ± 13 04– 411 (95.4%)	Vilaça 2006
Huelva ancient town	Local Bronze Age + Nuragic, Villanovan,	Bone	GrN 29512	2775 ± 25 98– 844 (95.4%)	Nijboer & van der Plicht 2006

Cypriot
 Black
 on Red,
 Greek
 SPG,
 Attic
 MG II,
 Eubean-
 Cycladic
 and
 Phoenician
 ceramics
 and
 other
 imports
 Finds
 and ^{14}C
 samples
 come
 from a
 waterlogged
 deposit,
 not
 from
 archaeological
 digging

Huelva	Local	Bone	GrN	2745 ± 251	Nijboer
ancient	Bronze		29511	826	& van
town	Age			(95.4%)	der
	+ Nuragic,				Plicht
	Villanovan,				2006
	Cypriot				
	Black				
	on Red,				
	Greek				
	SPG,				
	Attic				
	MG II,				
	Eubean-				
	Cycladic				

and
 Phoenician
 ceramics
 and
 other
 imports
 Finds
 and ^{14}C
 samples
 come
 from a
 waterlogged
 deposit,
 not
 from
 archaeological
 digging

Huelva	Local	Bone	GrN	2740 ± 269	Nijboer
ancient	Bronze		29513	821	& van
town	Age			(95.4%)	der
	+Nuragic,				Plicht
	Villanovan,				2006
	Cypriot				
	Black				
	on Red,				
	Greek				
	SPG,				
	Attic				
	MG II,				
	Eubean-				
	Cycladic				
	and				
	Phoenician				
	ceramics				
	and				
	other				
	imports				
	Finds				
	and ^{14}C				
	samples				

	come from a waterlogged deposit, not from archaeological digging					
Morro de Mezquite	Phoenician factory level	Wood	B-4178	2750 ± 500 810 (95.4%)	2006– 2001: 374	Aubert <i>et al.</i> 2005
Carthage	Phoenician factory phase 1 on virgin soil	Bone	GrN 26091	2710 ± 301 808 (95.4%)	2001– 2005	Docter <i>et al.</i> 2005
Carthage	Phoenician factory phase 2	Bone	GrN 26090	2650 ± 309 788 (95.4%)	2005– 2005	Docter <i>et al.</i> 2005
Carthage	Phoenician factory phase 2	Bone	GrN 26093	2640 ± 501 601 (95.4%)	2007– 2005	Docter <i>et al.</i> 2005
Lixus	Phoenician factory. SU 3049 directly above the oldest Stratigraphic Unit 3056	Seed	Beta 184134	2590 ± 401 552 (95.4%)	2001– 2005	Álvarez & Gómez Bellard 2005
Lixus	Phoenician factory phase 2 SU 3037	Seed	Beta 184133	2540 ± 402 539 (95.4%)	2002– 2005	Álvarez & Gómez Bellard 2005

Program OxCal v4.1.5 (2010) by C. Bronk Ramsey, Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit, University of Oxford, UK. Program accessible at <http://c14.arch.ox.ac.uk/embed.php?File=oxcal.html>; Atmospheric data from Reimer *et al.* (2009).

The most accepted explanations for Phoenician colonisation are those connected to Assyrian policies regarding the Phoenician cities, when Assurnassipal II (early ninth century BC in the historical chronology) ordered them to pay a tribute, and especially a century later when Tiglath-Pileser III conquered those cities and made them an Assyrian province. The only exception was Tyre, which maintained its ‘independence’ in exchange for a burdensome tribute in silver (Frankenstein 1997; Aubet 2001). A great variety of sites on both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar, however, have produced an increasing amount of ^{14}C data, which have pushed back the chronology of the first Phoenician colonies by almost 75 years. Either the Assyrian historical chronology is not correct, and the Tyrian enterprise should be connected with Assurnassipal’s policy rather than with Tiglath-Pileser’s, or we must seek other causes of Phoenician colonisation.

A second reason for questioning traditional explanations is that according to Hunt’s (2005) field research, there is no evidence at all for silver exploitation before the arrival of the Phoenicians. While it is true that the Tartessian territory was rich in minerals – especially silver, the metal used as the standard of value in the Near East – the mineral-rich belts of Riotinto and Aznalcóllar were composed of pyrites, and to extract silver it was necessary to use cupellation to separate it from lead and gold. According to Hunt (2005), there is no evidence of cupellation before the arrival of the Phoenicians. How did the Phoenicians know that the ‘far and misty west’ was rich in silver? How is it that they even knew that there were lands at the very end of the world?

Some authors have tried to solve this pitfall by suggesting a previous phase of exploration without settlement, what they call pre-colonisation, and to which they attributed a set

of Oriental items in the central and western Mediterranean. Most of them are very old finds, and therefore of uncertain contextualisation (Almagro 1993). At any rate, as the history of colonisation teaches us, any process of exploration requires the previous installation of a network of ports of call as helping points, as well as the gathering of information on routes, resources and local populations. As in the case of the Portuguese exploration of the African coast from the thirteenth century onwards, such processes left traces, even when there were no human settlements or written records (Marques and Alburquerque 1992).

The point I am going to maintain in the following pages is that when the Phoenicians arrived in the west, they already knew exactly where they were sailing to and what they were looking for, as well as what routes they should follow. The same could be said of the Greek colonisation of the central Mediterranean during the so-called Dark Ages: maritime routes persisted, although in a different way and probably with, in part at least, different agents. In what follows, it will be argued that we must look back on the recipients of the colonisation, i.e. the indigenous population, to try and find an explanation.

The Palace Collapse and the 'Democratisation' of Expertise

My point is that the collapse of palaces in the eastern Mediterranean allowed for the liberalisation not only of trade but also of skilled craftsmen, holders of expertise, who were previously dependent on the palace's demand and were now working on their own (Zaccagnini 1983: 264). In that way, and in a short period of time, 'know-how', referring not only to practical but also to symbolic and ideological domains, started arriving to the fringes of state societies. The potter's wheel, banquet sets and advances in agriculture are attested in the central Mediterranean in the Late Helladic IIIB and IIIC period (i.e. at the eve of the palace collapse or immediately afterwards), and could be explained within a

framework of Late Bronze Age (LBA) Mediterranean trade (Vagnetti 1998: 71–73; 1999; Vianello 2009: 49–50). Other early Mediterranean manifestations, such as armour or helmets in warriors' graves known in central Europe from the Bronze D period (ca. 1300–1200 BC), are understandable in the context of core/periphery relations on both sides of the Alps, and across the amber route (A.G. Sherratt 1994). These and other technical or symbolic innovations, however, were unknown in the barbarian world outside of these fringes.

It is when the palace economies decline that we start seeing changes in central Europe, leading to more stability in the landscape and in population growth. Harding (1989) pointed out long ago that crops such as millet, spelt wheat, rye or horse bean were neither introduced nor common in central and northwestern Europe until the LBA. What seems interesting is the fact that some of them (e.g. rye, millet and spelt) adapted to poor, acidic or sandy soils, cold, wet weather and short vegetative cycles, and appeared to be common in areas where, as Harding (1989: 177) stated, wheat could not be grown.

As for horse beans, they seem to have been introduced to central Europe in the LBA (Jäger and Ložek 1982: 173; Harding 1989: 176). Botanists refer to legumes as 'the meat of the poor' (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: 197) due to their high nutritional value, which is further enhanced when combined with cereals. Legumes can restore soil nitrogen levels as well, helping to preserve soil fertility where manuring is scarce or not practiced. Inevitably, they are used to feed animals, but also help to support growing populations. I feel it is no coincidence, therefore, that horse beans appear in funerary contexts in central Europe (Jäger and Ložek 1982: 173), as this reflects their significant symbolic importance in the renewal and regeneration of life (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: 197).

Such changes translated into population growth and increasing stability, the spread of metal for casting agrarian tools, and the greater exploitation of salt, which can only be explained as a result of the transmission of agrarian

expertise. As those crops mentioned above are of Mediterranean origin, and these agrarian changes are connected with the introduction of other Mediterranean techniques, such as hollow casting, the lost-wax technique, soldering, and with the distribution of Mediterranean-like metal drinking services and metal armour and helmets, we should consider such introductions as evidence of close contact between Mediterranean agents and a barbarian population.

Regarding the introduction of the potter's wheel and of some new cultigens (e.g. olive trees and grape vines) in the central Mediterranean during the LH period, Vagnetti (1998: 71), Bernardini (2008) and Lo Schiavo (2002: 69) have insisted many times that these types of knowledge transfer imply close contact between master and apprentice, i.e. that there were some Mycenaean and/or eastern Mediterranean craftsmen and traders permanently or occasionally installed among native populations. In the same way, technical and symbolic expertise introduced after 1200 BC in central and western Europe should be attributed to foreigners installed in the central Mediterranean following the collapse of the Mycenaean palace system. Among them, we could posit Cypriots in Sardinia and elsewhere in the central Mediterranean (Lo Schiavo 2001: 139). Cypriots, and perhaps other foreigners such as Aegeans and Levantines, might have been regularly based in several places in Italy, such as Sicily (Tanasi 2009: 53–54), Frattesina and the Padana region (Bietti Sestieri 1997: 765–66). At Frattesina, standardised weights are attested, together with LH IIIC pottery, amber beads, ostrich shells and some conical bronze ingots that are widely known from the Danube to the Alps. Pare (1999: 496) weighed some whole ingots of that type from the Madriolo (High Friuli, Italy; Borgna 2001: 59–61), Larnaud (France), Caixa (France), Schiers (Switzerland) and Dragomelj (Slovenia) hoards. The average weight identified of 475 g was considered by Pare to be a multiple of either a 9 g Cypriot shekel (Petruso 1984), or better still, the 9.3 g Syrian shekel. I have favoured elsewhere (Ruiz-Gálvez 2003: 155), however, the half-shekel of Asia Minor of 5.8 g as the corresponding unit for these bar ingots. As I have explained

elsewhere (Ruiz-Gálvez 2003: 155; 2008: 38), such a unit corresponds to half a shekel from Asia Minor and is the precursor of the Villanovan/Etruscan weight standard (Nijboer 1998: ch. 4; Maggiani 2002: 176, 180) and, later of the first Etruscan coinage (Parise 1985: 257–59). Parise (1985: 258–59) indicates that this 5.8 g unit (half a shekel from Asia Minor) is foreign to the Greek world, and is instead rooted in the Middle East. Thus, he believes that its expansion into the Tyrrhenian Sea followed the same route by which Aegean and Levantine bronzes and ceramics arrived in the eleventh century BC. Therefore, despite the strong Greek cultural and commercial impact in the Tyrrhenian Sea, the weight system used in Etruria was the Asia Minor rather than the Euboean standard, which indicates that the Cypro-Phoenician impact in Italy must have been deeper and more enduring than what we have been able to record archaeologically (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 1985; Lo Schiavo 1995; 2001; Sherratt 2003). Finally, Lassen (2000: 235) has also related a unit of 5.5 g to the few known weights of the Mycenaean period. In my view, we would be dealing again with the half-shekel from Asia Minor, and more importantly, this would indicate its strong presence in the Aegean at the end of the Mycenaean palace period.

What seems interesting to me is that the shekel from Asia Minor became the dominant unit in Cyprus, Cilicia and the Levant after 1200 BC (Zaccagnini 1991; Parise 2006), as these are precisely the areas where, according to Sherratt (1998: 304), the homeland of the Sea Peoples' phenomenon should be sought.

It could be said, therefore, that an ethnically heterogeneous group of traders and skilled craftsmen were regularly or permanently based at different points of the central Mediterranean before the historical Greek and Phoenician colonisations of the first millennium BC. If this is so, then it becomes apparent that the installation of Greek colonies at that time was systematic: they usually installed themselves in the same or nearby areas that Mycenaean trade had previously taken place. The same could also be said of the Phoenicians, who were present in Canaanite

(Aubet [2000](#)) and Cypriot LBA trading posts.

The Western Mediterranean as ‘Terra Incognita’

It might seem reasonable for us to think that once Mycenaean routes reached the Tyrrhenian Sea, the next step would have been the recognition of the western Mediterranean fringes. It is not that easy, however, because the sea between the Tyrrhenian islands and the Balearic archipelago is a visual desert, and sailors were out of sight of land when they sailed westwards (Guerrero [2006](#): 90–91). One way to overcome that challenge would be, as Guerrero ([2006](#): 91) suggests, coastal navigation via the Gulf of Lyon, along the shores of Provence and Languedoc, proceeding past the mouth of the Ebro River, to the coastline of Valencia and southeastern Andalusia. Following that route, however, implies, in my view, that foreigners would be familiar with native sailors and local anchorages. Once those Mediterranean traders reached southeastern Andalusia, they would have to cope with another difficulty, i.e. crossing the Strait of Gibraltar, before proceeding to Tartessos. As anyone who has passed through Gibraltar knows, when the Gulf Stream enters the Mediterranean through the Strait, western currents are dominant, and in summer the winds blow predominantly from the east. Traditional fishermen of the area used an old trick by navigating towards the African coast to seize the east–west current, which facilitated passage through the Strait (Fernández [2005](#)). Mediterranean sailors, therefore, would have needed to learn from the natives. Furthermore, the route becomes more difficult after passing Gibraltar, as the coast is rocky and the winds blow from the west until reaching Cape Trafalgar, pushing boats towards the shore (Fernández [2005](#)). The dangers do not stop there, as beyond the Guadiana River, the coast is straight, with few good anchorages until the Sines peninsula ([Figure 11.1](#)).

In sum, to reach the Mediterranean fringe would, in my view, imply the following preconditions:

- a) being able to use native routes;
- b) developments in nautical techniques, including building ships with greater self-sufficiency and carrying capacity (i.e. with enough room inside so that the crew could sleep onboard, instead of beaching at dusk, and a larger cargo hold to compensate for the long and risky journey); and therefore
- c) the ability to sail at night, which would have helped, at least in part, to avoid longer and more dangerous cabotage routes.

The second and third prerequisites, involving innovations in naval building, existed from the fourteenth–thirteenth century BC onwards in the eastern Mediterranean, as attested by the Uluburun and Cape Gelidonya wrecks (Bass *et al.* 1967; Pulak 1997). Another innovation, the use of brails instead of booms (Basch 1987, cited in Sherratt and Sherratt 1991: 373–74) is depicted in Ramses III’s naval battle at Medinet Habu. These Aegean-type vessels were more manoeuvrable, profited more from the winds and allowed for more free space on the deck, which could be used either for more rowers or for carrying more cargo (S. Sherratt 1994). Night navigation could have been developed by the LBA if Frost’s (2001; 2002) interpretation of the Temple of Baal at Ugarit and the Byblos Temple as proto-lighthouses is correct. Furthermore, Gasull (1986) interprets the jars attached at the stern of some of the boats depicted in the Kenamun tomb as position lights. All of these indications point to a later date, either LH IIIB2 or IIIC (i.e. from the palace collapse) for the first serious incursions to the furthest fringes of the Mediterranean, as those Aegean-type vessels are only depicted on LH IIIB or IIIC ceramics, or engraved in mid-thirteenth–twelfth century BC contexts (Artzy 1997; 1998). My conclusion is therefore that the first explorations of the western Mediterranean took place in conjunction with the disappearance of state-organised trade.

Evidence of People or Imports from the Eastern Mediterranean before Colonisation

Although the evidence is not as impressive, plentiful or varied as in the central Mediterranean in the Mycenaean and post-Mycenaean periods, there are nevertheless some clues that allow us to think that knowledge transfer took place within the western Mediterranean and, therefore, that some foreign agents were installed either seasonally or permanently among native populations (Ruiz-Gálvez [2009: 101–11](#)).

Wheelmade Pottery

Wheelmade pottery is known in LBA pre-Phoenician contexts, which could be placed between the thirteenth and mid-ninth centuries BC in Iberia. Some of this pottery, such as that from the Andalusian site of Montoro (Martín de la Cruz [1988](#)), undoubtedly represents Mycenaean imports, as petrographic analysis has pointed to a Mycenae-Berati workshop. There are also, however, some plain sherds found at different Andalusian sites,^{[1](#)} all of them apparently made at the same unknown workshop, and even others that are handmade local imitations of wheelmade pottery (Perlines [2005](#)) ([Figure 11.2](#)).

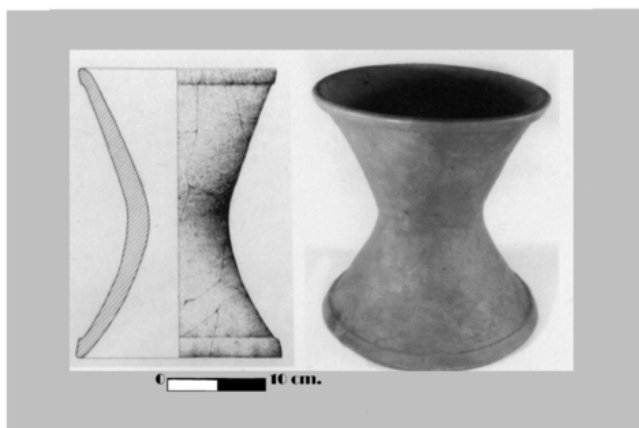
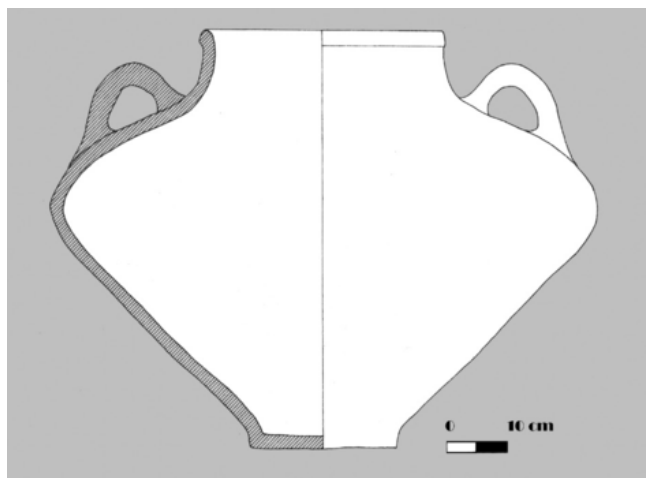


Figure 11.2. Wheelmade pottery from the Bronze Age site of Purullena (Granada, Andalucía, Spain) (above) (drawing after F. Molina and E. Pareja 1975) and (below) wheelmade pottery from the Bronze Age site of Llanete de los Moros (Córdoba, Spain) (photo and drawing after Martín de la Cruz 1987).

The Mycenaean sherds from Montoro were analysed by Podzuweit (1990), who was not able to reconstruct the shape of the pots because of their small size. Due to their good fabric quality, however, he concluded that they should be dated before the LH IIIC period. Regarding their

chronology, although there are ^{14}C samples from the levels above (CSIC-794, CSIC-625 and CSIC 624) and one from the level containing these sherds (CSIC-795), the high standard deviation of ± 50 years reduces their accuracy (Table 11.1). Two other sherds from Purullena, a container and a stand, were found in a hut together with local Cogotas I pottery (Arribas 1976). They are dated by two ^{14}C samples: one from charcoal (GrN-7285) and a second from charred cereal (GrN-7284). Interestingly, neutron activation analysis (Perlines 2005) of these two sherds indicates they were made at the same workshop as the other plain wheelmade ware found at Montoro, in the level above the Mycenaean pottery, and are carbon dated (CSIC-624) to 1260–930 Cal BC. According to Perlines (2005: 480–81), wheelmade plain pottery is found at two different time periods at Montoro. The first period is represented by local Cogotas I pottery and the two Mycenaean sherds; the second, when Cogotas I ceramics are gradually being substituted by burnished wares, is represented by most of the plain wheelmade sherds. The Cogotas I culture can be fixed between the thirteenth and tenth centuries BC by ^{14}C data (Ruiz-Gálvez 1995; Castro *et al.* 1996). Following this dating, the second period, involving the wheelmade plain pottery, should be dated between the tenth century BC and the last quarter of the ninth century BC.

Recently, Torres (2008: 62) has pointed to a Cypriot origin for the container found at Purullena. He compares it to a Cypriot pithoid jar known from Kommos, room X4 of the Minoan house X, dated to the Late Minoan IIIA2 period (Torres 2008: 63), and also from the Uluburun shipwreck.² He therefore suggests a fourteenth-century BC date for both this container and the related Montoro wheelmade pottery (Torres 2008: 63). On the basis of two ^{14}C dates from Purullena, particularly the one derived from the charred cereal sample, however, a later thirteenth-century BC cannot be ruled out (Ruiz-Gálvez 2009: 101). While other types of Cypriot pithoi have been found in the Uluburun wreck dating to the fourteenth century BC (Pulak 1997: fig. 10), they have also been recovered from the thirteenth-century BC Cape Gelidonya and Point Iria shipwrecks (Vichos and

Lolos 1997: 323–25; Åström 1999). A second reason to suggest a mid-thirteenth-century BC date for the Cypriot pottery found at Purullena is the ¹⁴C date from Montoro (CSIC-624) of 1260–930 Cal BC for the level that included the wheelmade sherds made at the same workshop as the Purullena pottery.

In conclusion, there are reasons for thinking that this Mycenaean ware was brought to Montoro by Cypriots instead of Mycenaeans (Torres 2008; Ruiz-Gálvez 2005b, 2009). Furthermore, there are reasons for suggesting a mid-thirteenth-century date for this pottery. Finally, there are other plain wheelmade sherds of probable Cypriot origin that are found at Montoro, Purullena and other Andalusian sites, in local Cogotas I and later contexts. In my view, this indicates either that traders from the eastern Mediterranean, probably Cypriots, had been frequenting Iberian shores for several centuries, or that there were artisans settled on a permanent or seasonal basis among the indigenous population, as happened in Italy (Vagnetti 1998: 71). I feel the second possibility would better explain the indigenous imitations of wheelmade pottery referred to by Perlines (2005: 487).

An Aegean-Type Ship in the Laxe Auga dos Cervos Petroglyph

According to Galician specialists in rock art, the petroglyph at Laxe Auga dos Cervos is odd (Figure 11.3). Several red deer have been engraved on top of the rock and a ship beneath it. Estévez (2008: 201–202) has suggested that these representations may not have been contemporaneous, although there are no clear differences in the way the grooves are made in either case. Apparently, the way the red deer are depicted is unusual, as is the place chosen for the engraving: a flat granite surface within the course of a stream, in a sunken and almost invisible area with limited visibility.

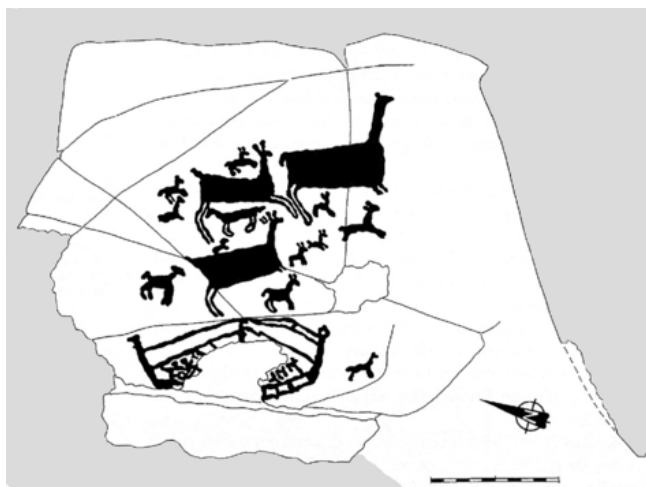


Figure 11.3. Ship depiction on the Laxe dos Cervos rock carving (Santa Maria de Oia, Vigo, Galicia, Spain) (drawing after F.J. Costas Goberna, in Costas and de la Peña 2011).

Regarding the ship, both González Ruibal (2004: 289) and I (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: 289; 2005b) have pointed to LH IIIB2 and IIIC period parallels. While in Estévez's view (2008: 202) visibility from the petroglyph is limited, Alonso (1995), who published this petroglyph, insisted that it commanded a view of the Santa Maria de Oya bay. It is one of the rare coves that exist in this part of southwestern Galicia, which runs from the mouth of the Miño River to the Vigo estuary, and is characterised by its straight, rocky and dangerous coastline. Although the type of boat depicted at Laxe Auga dos Cervos is referred to as Aegean, such representations are widely depicted in the eastern Mediterranean, and are known at Kition (Karageorghis 1985), Akko, Tell Nami (Artzy 1997; 1998) and Dakhleh (Basch 1997) on LH IIIB2 and IIIC pottery, and in Ramses III's naval war relief at Medinet Habu, where the Sea Peoples are represented manning such ships (Wachsmann 1998; Ruiz-Gálvez 2005b). Furthermore, a glass bead considered to be of Mycenaean origin has been discovered by a rescue dig at the Vigo University Campus, not far from where the Laxe Auga dos Cervos ship is located. The bead was found together with fragments of large hand mills inside a LBA silo (González

Ruibal 2004: fig. 2)

Other ship depictions of Mediterranean character are known from the Cádiz province in Andalusia, although they are less clearly of Aegean type. Some boats painted in red and black are seen at the Laja Alta rock shelter. Although located in the interior, it dominated the sheltered area formed by the La Janda lagoon and the Barbate River, which was navigable between 6000–2500 BP, and which was connected with the open sea through the Béjer-Barbate tectonic groove. Another interesting particularity of the site is that, as at Laxe Auga dos Cebros, the area is difficult for sailing, as it is close to Cape Tarifa and the Strait of Gibraltar, where there are changes in wind and current patterns (Ruiz-Gálvez 2005b: 316–17; Samaniego 2007).

Despite the sailing difficulties, centuries later, Herodotus narrated how the traveller and trader Kolaïos of Samos reached Tartessos in a penteconter. While it seems unlikely to me that a group of adventurers and entrepreneurs were able to reach the Iberian shores, rowing and sailing directly from somewhere in the eastern Mediterranean, it would be possible by using ports of call, for which the Mediterranean islands are particularly well placed.

Place Names Ending in -ουσσα

There are several clues which support my suggestions. One involves place names ending in -ουσσα, such as *Pithekoussai*, the first Greek colony in the central Mediterranean; this place name is also known on the north African coast (Boardman 2006: 195–96). Other examples include *Ichnoussa*, the Greek name for Sardinia; *Meloussa* (Menorca); *Kromyoussa* (Mallorca); *Pityoussa* (Ibiza); *Ophioussa* (Formentera) in the Balearic Islands, although there is also an *Ophioussa* somewhere in Galicia; and *Kotinoussa*, one of the islands that was once part of Gadir. All of these, according to linguists, are datable to the beginning of the Greek Iron Age, and are concentrated particularly in two areas: eastern Greece and Asia Minor on one side, and the western Mediterranean on the other (García Alonso 1996). It

should be noted that these place names always refer to islands. There is a legend as well, reported by both Dionysius Periegetes and Aristotle, according to which the Strait of Gibraltar was first called Chronos' Pillars and then Briareos' Pillars, long before it became known as the Pillars of Herakles. López Pardo (2004) claims that this legend suggests a Semitic origin for Chronos and an Euboean one for Briareo and, therefore, the memory of ancient Levantine and Euboean journeys to the west. In a similar way, Boardman (2006) recently proposed a kind of joint venture between Euboeans and Phoenicians in the western Mediterranean at a very early date.

The Shekel from Asia Minor

I have referred above to the wide presence of the Asia Minor standard in Italy and the transalpine area in post-Mycenaean times (Zaccagnini 1991; Ruiz-Gálvez 2003). In 1996, Galán identified the shekel from Asia Minor as the basis of the weights of the LBA Sagrajas/Berzocana type of gold torque (Galán and Ruiz-Gálvez 1996). In turn, I associated the Tara-Yeovil type of gold torque, the ingot from Runnymede Bridge, and the Erswesbalde gold hoard with that same Asia Minor unit (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: ch. 7). Of course, I am not trying to say that Cypriots, Levantines or whoever were reaching Britain. What I mean to suggest is that after the collapse of ca. 1200 BC, and before Greek and Phoenician colonisation, the eastern standard was widely known, and probably connected with a scrap metal trade between west and east, within which Iberia and Italy played the role of middlemen for the Atlantic areas and transalpine Europe respectively (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: 272–89). Unlike in Italy, however, we do not find actual weights in Iberia, rather just metalwork standardised to the Asia Minor unit, which leads us to suspect that it was through Italy and the Tyrrhenian islands that the technical, social and economic innovations related to that unit of weight reached the farthest fringes of the Mediterranean. The role played by central Mediterranean natives as middlemen in a physical but also social and technical way between eastern traders and western locals is a question that deserves future exploration

(Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: 276–77; Lo Schiavo 2005: 431).

Technical Innovations

If my suspicion is correct, then we have to accept that some foreigners settled among local communities. Indeed, along with the Asia Minor standard, there are several Mediterranean technical innovations that were applied to indigenous materials. These include rotary motion, the lost-wax casting technique, soldering, the use of iron and agricultural improvements.

The tools of rotary motion technology are used to cast a kind of gold bracelet or torque, known as the Villena type after a well-known hoard in southeast Spain. According to specialists (Armbruster and Perea 1994), these items were made by a complex gold-work technique, involving lost wax and a vertical axe lathe. Other than the Villena hoard, this type of gold-work is well known along the Iberian Peninsula's Atlantic façade, and is thought to date to the LBA, although most of the representative objects are isolated finds. In two cases, however, the Villena and Berzocana hoards, there are some clues regarding dating. The Villena hoard was found inside a handmade local container, in a pit dug in the middle of a dry stream, near an important Bronze Age site called Cabezo Redondo (Figure 11.4). The hoard is usually considered to be connected to it. It consisted of a set of 11 gold-plated bowls, decorated in the same pattern as the local Cogotas I pottery; five drinking bottles (two of them gold and the others silver); one iron and 28 gold bracelets; an iron item inlaid with gold; and another of amber coated with gold, topped with a double-ended nail to secure it to something (Perea 1991: 103).

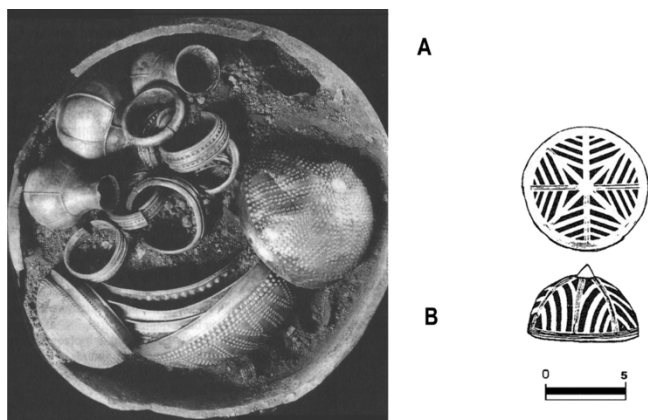


Figure 11.4. (a) The discovery of the Bronze Age Villena hoard (Alicante, Comunidad Valenciana, Spain), and (b) detail of the gold-inlaid iron item (drawing from photo; photo by Miguel Flor).

Villena is not an area rich in metals, but it is in salt and pasturage, and it controlled a passageway between the coast and the interior. Some clues can help to date the hoard. The gold-inlaid iron object was, in my view (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998: 276–78), prized as a rarity instead of a practical item, and demonstrates limited familiarity with the new metal. For this reason, it should be dated well before the first indications of iron smelting in Spain, which are attested at the Phoenician colonies of Toscanos and Trayamar. Iron was an exotic material in LBA Mycenaean contexts; its earliest exploitation took place in Cyprus after 1200 BC (S. Sherratt 1994). Amber is also an exotic item at Villena. The nearest point where it is recorded is the central Mediterranean, both in Mycenaean and post-Mycenaean times (Fratttesina; Vianello 2005: 89–91). Nails were unknown in the Bronze Age, having been developed in Cyprus ca. 1200 BC (Catling 1964: 138). Furthermore, the gold-plate technique, the drinking set and the use of lost wax with a vertical axe lathe were all previously unknown in Iberia. For these reasons, I have interpreted the hoard as a personal possession and a diplomatic gift, from someone coming either from the central or eastern Mediterranean after 1200 BC and before Phoenician colonisation (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998).

The second hoard also shows strong connections with the Cypriot-Levantine area. The Berzocana hoard is an isolated find of two gold torques and a bronze bowl (Figure 11.5). The torques have been made by the casting-on technique (Perea 1995: 73), and weigh six-and-a-half and ca. eight times the Asia Minor shekel respectively (Galán and Ruiz-Gálvez 1996: table 2). The bowl, which was cast using the lost-wax technique, has been identified by Torres (2012) as being of Cypriot-Canaanite type. It has a close resemblance to bowls from the Jatt hoard (Israel), which is dated between the second half of the eleventh century BC and the beginning of the tenth century BC (Artzy 2006), as well as the bowl found at locus 1739 of stratum VIa in Megiddo (Loud 1948: 150 and pls 189–90; Harrison 2004: pl. 32, nos 4–5). Artzy (2006: 73–75) mentions a second hoard associated with stratum VIa, found by the Hebrew University expedition in 1969, and dated to the end of the eleventh century BC. She endorses Finkelstein's interpretation that Megiddo VIa–VIb was a Canaanite city, actively involved in maritime trade with both Phoenicians and Cypriots.



Figure 11.5. Bronze bowl and two gold neck-rings from the Bronze Age Berzocana hoard (Cáceres, Extremadura, Spain) (drawing after Almagro 1993).

In sum, the Villena and Berzocana hoards suggest either Cypriot or Canaanite/Levantine origins, and should be dated earlier than the first Phoenician colonies in Iberia.

Other iron finds are well dated in pre-Phoenician contexts ([Table 11.1](#)). Several hill forts in the Portuguese Beiras, close

to the coast, or accessible to it through the Tagus, Mondego or Aveiro river mouths (which were wider at the time; [Figure 11.1](#)), witness the presence of iron in clearly indigenous contexts, where there are no Phoenician imports, and with ^{14}C dates that are distinctly earlier than those associated with Phoenician Archaic colonisation ([Vilaça 2006](#)). There are not only iron knives, but also tools, which could imply that a craftsman was working there. Other Mediterranean imports, such as Baltic amber or faience, also occur at some of these sites.

Among these, one item stands out: a chisel cast in iron and awkwardly incorporated into a bronze handle that mimics local metallurgy. This would indicate, in my view, that locals knew about iron, and acquired it from Mediterranean agents. They did not know how to cast it, however, being only precariously familiar with the new metal, and therefore they adapted the chisel to local tools. It comes from the Baiões hill fort, where two hoards were recovered, one containing three gold Sagrajas/Berzocana's type torques, and the other a smelting hoard, to which the iron chisel belongs ([Figure 11.6](#)). Armbruster ([2002–2003](#): 145–46) has recently analysed the hoard objects, which betray evidence of several casting techniques. On the one hand, the use of bivalve moulds reflects local Bronze Age techniques, and the use of the lost-wax technique and forging reflect Mediterranean traditions, on the other hand. Armbruster ([2002–2003](#): 146) also claims that the iron chisel was incorporated into a bronze tool by using the casting-on technique, which according to Perea ([1995](#): 73) was a local practice. Other interesting items in the Baiões hoard include bronze bowls of Cypriot or Levantine origin ([Torres 2012](#)), which were probably scrap objects. The same is probably true of a Cypriot or Sardinian incense burner in the same hoard.

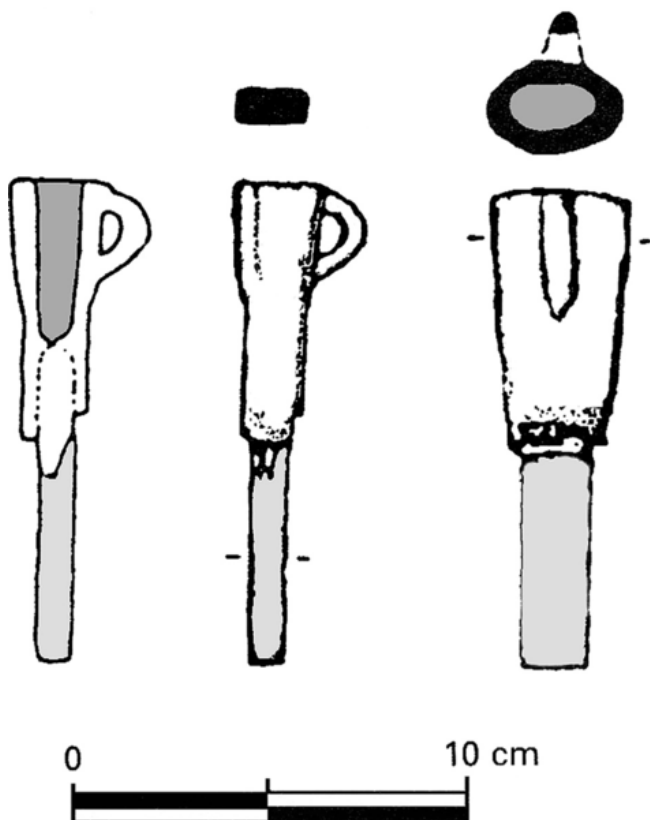


Figure 11.6. Bronze hafted iron chisel of the hoard found at the Bronze Age site of Baiões (San Pedro do Sul, Beira Alta, Portugal) (drawing after A. Coelho 1986).

All in all, the discoveries of iron in local Bronze Age contexts point again to the presence, either seasonal or permanent, of some Cypriot or Levantine agents within the local population. As with other areas of central and western Europe, it was during the LBA that a process of population growth and stability began in much of western Iberia, along with a stronger pattern of territorial control. It was also the time when the first agricultural tools cast in bronze appeared. As argued above, this is possibly the result of widespread innovations in agriculture, whose origins should be sought, as with iron, rotary motion, and the lost-wax technique, in the eastern Mediterranean.

The SW Warrior Stele

It is precisely after the palace collapse but before Phoenician colonisation (i.e. ca. 1200–850/825 Cal BC) that, in my view, the iconography of the LBA warrior stele fits. Surely very few, if any, of the Mediterranean objects depicted in them (i.e. chariots, lyres, shields and mirrors) would actually have reached Iberia, other than in their representations on textiles, ivory, carved wood, pottery or other media. Especially significant is the common depiction of a chariot or a warrior associated with a chariot, as I believe this mirrored a Mediterranean symbol of power, such as the representation of the Egyptian pharaoh on a two-wheeled chariot ([Figure 11.7](#)). According to Knapp ([1998](#)), this iconography became a standard symbol of power in the eastern Mediterranean after the sixteenth century BC. It is from this Egyptian iconography that the man on a chariot in Mycenaean iconography derived and, eventually, those representations on Scandinavian rock art (Ruiz-Gálvez [2005b](#); [2009](#)). Other elements depicted on the warrior stelae are drawn from diverse origins, such as local swords and spears, and Aegean or Levantine lyres, helmets and mirrors. What really matters is that they were combined to build a language of power aimed at the local population, and were probably related to the emergence of heroic lineages and territorial control (Galán [1993](#)).

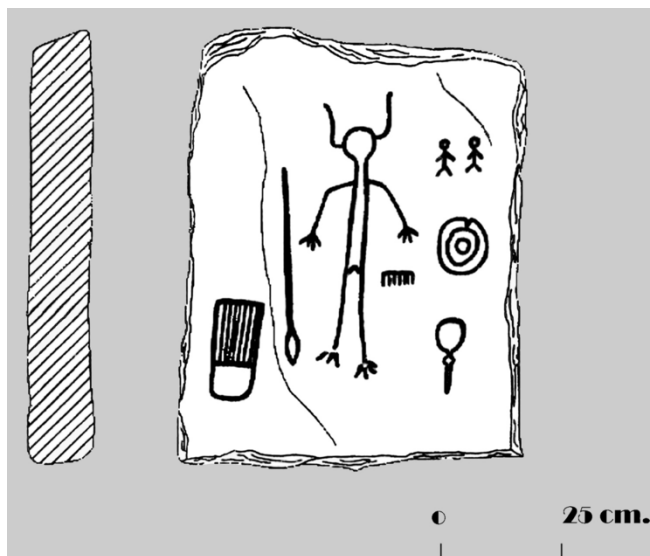


Figure 11.7. Late Bronze Age fragmented warrior stele from Cortijo de la Reina (Córdoba, Andalucía, Spain) (drawing after Murillo *et al.* 2005).

And Huelva at Last

In the late 1990s, a remarkable discovery of imported items occurred in the old town of Huelva, although unfortunately not from systematic excavation (González de Canales *et al.* 2004). These objects included local handmade stroke-burnished and painted pottery, Phoenician imported ware, including transport amphorae, Attic Middle Geometric II and Euboean-Cycladic pottery of the pendant semicircles type, Cypriot Black on Red ware, Italian Villanovan pottery and Sardinian impressed circle jugs. Other finds indicate the presence at the site of specialised craftsmen involved in the working of ivory, beads, bone and ostrich eggs, as well as metals smelting, including the first evidence of silver work. Of no less interest are the 11 instances of graffiti on sherds and ivory written in Phoenician, at least one of them (n. 2) being very old, as well as the fragments of a (possibly) wooden board and stylus. Finally, there were some lead weights belonging to the Syrian standard (Ruiz-Gálvez 2005a; 2008). Three bone samples have been carbon dated to between 930–830 Cal BC (Nijboer and van der Plicht

2006).

Some authors attribute all of these imports to Phoenician trade, which is attested by the end of the tenth century BC at sites such as Kommos (Crete), and by the mid-ninth century BC at Sant'Imbenia (Sardinia) (González de Canales *et al.* 2004; Nijboer 2008; Aubet 2008). On the other hand, along with others (Botto 2004–2005; Bernardini 2008: 164; Ruiz-Gálvez 2008: 38–39), I see a more complex situation involving the participation of others, including Sardinian and local sailors. There were probably other agents as well, because the unit of weigh shown at Huelva is the Syrian standard, not the 7.9 g Phoenician shekel that accompanies Phoenician trade. The latter unit is recorded at the tenth-century BC family tomb 1 of Achziv (Mazar 2004), at the Phoenician colony of Cerro del Villar, and at the Tartessian palace of Cancho Roano (Aubet 2002). The Syrian unit, on the other hand, is not unique to Huelva. To that same standard belong other sets of weights coming from several LBA Portuguese sites which have common ¹⁴C dates that place them between the eleventh and tenth centuries BC, making them partially contemporary with Huelva (Vilaça 2003: table 1). At some of these Portuguese sites, such as Monte do Trigo, along with the weights have been found iron tools or weapons, and faience, always associated with local handmade pottery (Vilaça 2006).

Although widespread in the eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age, the Syrian standard was replaced in the early Iron Age by the Asia Minor system, the most common unit in Cyprus, southern Anatolia and the Levant (Zaccagnini 1991; Parise 2006). The Syrian unit, however, is still attested in three phase 2 tombs at Perati (Attica), dated by Iakovidis (1980; 2003) to the mid-LH IIIC period. Some of the weights from the Warrior Trader tomb (79) at Lefkandi have also been assigned to the Syrian unit, and are dated to the mid-ninth century BC (Kroll 2008: 38). Unfortunately, the weights were burned in a pyre together with their owner, so their poor state of preservation, burned and sometimes fractured, raises serious reservations about any possible assignment to either standard. More securely of

the Syrian standard are the weights in tombs 76 and 89 of the eleventh-century BC cemetery at Skales (Cyprus; Curtois 1983: 424–25). Probably to that same unit belongs a weight of around 4 g from Salamis Tomb 1, together with Proto-White and White Painted I ware, some Phoenician imported pottery, bronzes and jewels of Syro-Canaanite origin. The tomb is dated to the early eleventh century BC (Yon 1971: 19). Despite having been substituted by the Asia Minor standard, therefore, the Syrian unit was still used in the early Iron Age in Cyprus and perhaps the Aegean, although, significantly, not in Sardinia (Ruiz-Gálvez 2003). On the contrary, it was probably still in use during the second half of the eleventh century or the beginning of the tenth century BC (Artzy 2006: 73).

It is also tempting to associate the zoomorphic weights of the hoard, or more likely tomb, of Jatt with the Syrian unit, and other Iron Age I examples from Megiddo VIa and Taanach. Zoomorphic weights of Syrian/Egyptian type are common both in the Syro-Palestinian coast and in Iron Age Cyprus (Artzy 2006: 66, 95). Unfortunately, in some cases, their weight is not specified, and in others they have been manipulated.

In any case, except for Huelva, all the evidence of Mediterranean imports and techniques in pre-colonial Iberia point to a connection with Cyprus, the Levant and perhaps the eastern Aegean. In this regard, it is worth recalling again the Jatt hoard or tomb. Among the weapons, there is a set of bronze ‘lance-like’ arrowheads. Although they have no inscriptions, they are similar to others studied by Heltzer (2000) that have Late Canaanite writing, some of which belonged to warriors from Sidon, Tyre, Egypt or Cyprus. Some inscriptions refer to a leader of a group of warriors, while others mention the leader of a merchant group.

I will conclude with two thoughts. First, on the subject of the SW warrior stele, these cannot have mimicked Mycenaean practices because, when they were carved, the palaces no longer existed. They could have mimicked an iconography of power widespread across the Mediterranean from the sixteenth century BC onwards (Knapp 1998), which

is evoked in mid-LH IIIC pottery that depicts a masculine heroic ethos, as at Perati and Lefkandi (Crielaard 2006: 278–82). Incidentally, chariot depictions were more common on LH IIIA/B ware in Cyprus and the Levant than in Greece (Artzy 2006: 93). Moreover, the custom of feasting with music, including lyre players (Braun 2002: 80–85), has a long tradition in the Canaanite world, and according to Artzy (2006), it is thus via Cyprus that the Greek symposium was distributed.

Second, it helps to contextualise the SW inscriptions, documented on epigraphic stele (Figure 11.8), which neither covered tombs, nor can be dated to the Iron Age (Vilhena 2008), and whose writing cannot be Phoenician, as it preserves features that do not happen in Linear Phoenician, but do appear in earlier Semitic writings (Ruiz-Gálvez 1998; 2008; Rodríguez Ramos 2002).

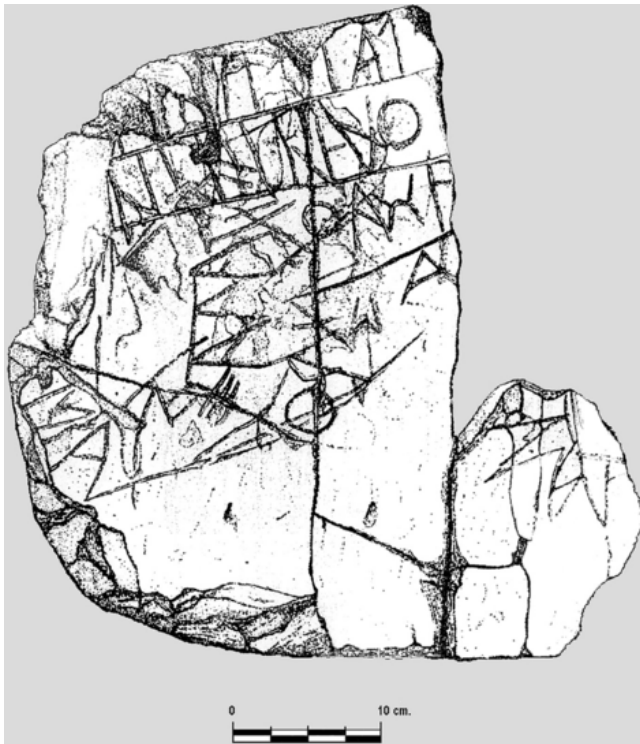


Figure 11.8. Late Bronze/Iron Age transitional epigraphic stele from Estela de Neves II (Castro Verde, Baixo Alentejo,

Portugal) (after Maia and Correa 1985).

Notes

1 Montoro, Purullena, Carmona and Gatas (Perlines 2005).

2 Catalogue number KW5833 (Pulak 1994 cited in Torres 2008).

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12 Colonisations and Cultural Developments in the Central Mediterranean

Tamar Hodos

Abstract

The long-distance movement of Greek and Phoenician populations to the central Mediterranean has been a long-time focus of scholarship. Their study has been polarised by discipline (Classical or Near Eastern archaeology), however, and traditionally framed by contemporary perspectives. This contribution will begin with a brief discussion of Greek and Phoenician colonisation in the central Mediterranean as an historical activity. Drawing upon contemporary hybridisation and globalisation theories, it will then examine the Greeks and Phoenicians of Sicily and Malta, especially their localised identities embedded within shared practices that contributed to the constructions of 'Greek' and 'Phoenician' culture. This chapter will also highlight the interactions between the colonising and existing local communities in Sicily and Malta as articulated through shared and modified practices expressed in the material culture record. The final section will assess the cultural and sociopolitical development of Malta and Sicily, both of which were geographically situated at strategic locales within a connected Mediterranean, to argue that their respective diverse developments resulted from their engagements with one another and the broader central Mediterranean.

Cultural Mobility in the Iron Age Mediterranean

To many scholars of the Mediterranean, the Iron Age period is characterised by changes from many of the previous traditions of the Bronze Age that were brought about by the widespread social and political upheavals at the end of the twelfth century BC. The most marked development may be the intense mobility of cultural groups during this period. For the first time in Mediterranean history, individuals and groups of people travelled further, in greater numbers and with increasing frequency than ever before witnessed. It is this mobility that gave rise to population resettlement and cross-cultural influences in materials, styles, practices and beliefs that resulted in shared cultural traits before the middle of the first millennium BC.

The enduring use of the term 'Iron Age' when referring to this absolute period of Mediterranean history reflects a Graeco-Phoenician chronology that scholars who focus on regional locales may dislike, for in many places changes from Bronze Age traditions do not occur until significantly later. In Sicily, for instance, such developments are not apparent before the ninth century BC, while in parts of north Africa, they do not occur until the fourth century BC. The terminology therefore suggests an interpretational framework that puts Greek and Phoenician evidence before others and implies that any local cultural changes will be derived from this material and its associated cultural values and ideas. This kind of criticism is similar to that levied against terms such as Hellenisation and Romanisation, now widely rejected for similar reasons (on Hellenisation: recently Hall 2002; 2007; Antonaccio 2010; on Romanisation: recently Hingley 2005: 14–48; Mattingly 2010). In this case, however, there is still a certain applicability. Although the term 'Iron Age' is not a fixed chronological indicator, nor is it a statement of specific material practice (the use of iron) in every context, it retains a pan-Mediterranean function given that the Greeks and Phoenicians established communities across the

Mediterranean and continued to maintain and practice their cultures, even if in colonial forms. Furthermore, these overseas Greek and Phoenician communities were the backbone of the interconnectivity that the Mediterranean witnessed during the early first millennium BC (Hodos 2009). Therefore, Iron Age remains a valuable term of characterisation for the Mediterranean at large during this time. It should not, however, be judged as implying any kind of cultural superiority; it simply provides a means to unite a number of related practices and social values across a wide geographic area. Within this, however, it must be acknowledged that, on a more localised scale, there will be differences in the articulation of those practices as well as very divergent practices. It is the balance between these different scales, and between the various communities and populations themselves under discussion, that renders agreed vocabulary so difficult to achieve.

Our terminological difficulties partly derive from our written evidence for Greek and Phoenician colonisation as an historical activity. Literary references have long since furnished scholarship with historical and social indications regarding the movement of groups of Greeks and Phoenicians across the Mediterranean and their foundation of settlements on foreign shores. Yet such sources were often written centuries later by individuals living under different social and political circumstances. These authors were writing for their own contemporary audience, utilising concepts that their readership would understand, and their aims were not necessarily to impart an accurate or impartial history. Nevertheless, scholarly interest in the movement of Greeks and Phoenicians in the Mediterranean has used the written evidence available as a starting point of investigation. This revealed discrepancies between the foundation dates provided by ancient sources and the earliest material evidence recovered from those colonial sites (e.g. Thapsos ware in Sicily: de Angelis 2009: 54–58; Hodos 2009).

Contact and communication did not cease altogether after the late twelfth century BC, although during the eleventh

century it was largely restricted to elites in Greece and the Near East (Papadopoulos, present volume). Material evidence of any connecting activity in the central Mediterranean before the tenth century is sporadic and often contextually unknown or disputed, with material arguments resting largely on style. One famous example is a bronze statuette of a walking Phoenician deity, found off the coast of Selinunte (Sicily) and argued originally to be of Bronze Age date for stylistic reasons (Tusa 1973), although it finds parallels with examples dating as late as the seventh century (Falsone 1993). The Nora stele from Sardinia is also dated only stylistically, as it lacks an archaeological context (summarised in Markoe 2000: 177–78; Aubet 2001: 206–209; see also Bondi *et al.* 2009). Scholars have tried to reconcile the literary attestations of early engagement (twelfth century BC for the Phoenicians) with the lack of datable material evidence by suggesting an archaeologically invisible period of pre-colonisation merchant venture activity (e.g. Aubet 2001: 200–201; Niemeyer 2006). It has been argued, however, that as the literary sources belong to different and substantially later cultural traditions, there is no need to regard such information as privileged or decisive. Furthermore, since the cited archaeological evidence of this period is dated only by loose stylistic parallels, there is even less support for such a phase (van Dommelen 1998: 71–76).

The earliest firm evidence of Phoenician settlement in the central and western Mediterranean dates to the ninth century. At Carthage (Figure 12.1), specifically, material from the earliest settlement contexts, under the Decumanus Maximus, has produced radiocarbon dates in the spectrum of 850 and 730 BC, with some falling into a more specific range of 830–805 BC (Docter *et al.* 2005; 2008; Niemeyer *et al.* 2007). These are particularly tantalising for they accord with ancient literary reference to Carthage's foundation in 814 BC (Flavius Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, 1.125; Justinus 18.4–6). For the far west, the evidence may be earlier, notably from Huelva, where Phoenician-style material has been recovered from unstratified, waterlogged contexts, cattle bones from which have been radiocarbon-dated to significantly earlier in the ninth century (de Canales *et al.*

2006; Nijboer and van der Plicht 2006). Late ninth-century radiocarbon dates have been obtained from Morro de Mezquitilla, along the Málaga coastline of Spain, and a series of eighth-century dates has been calibrated from elsewhere along Spain's Mediterranean and Atlantic coastlines with Phoenician material (e.g. Aubet 2001: 372–81; González-Ruibal 2004; Nijboer and van der Plicht 2006; van der Plicht *et al.* 2009). Related objects without absolutely dated contexts from western Spain and Portugal, including painted pottery, decorated stele, shields with V-shaped armholes, bronze helmets and bronze bowls (Schauer 1983; Coffyn 1985; Almagro Gorbea 1989) can therefore be rehabilitated within a ninth- and eighth-century horizon that takes into account the Atlantic circulation of metals during this time (Kristiansen 1998: 157–60; Ruiz-Gálvez Priego 1995 and present volume), with the Iberian peninsula forming a bridgehead between the Atlantic trade and the metalliferous regions of the Mediterranean, notably Sardinia and Cyprus (Delgado Hervás 2008; Arruda 2009).



Figure 12.1. Map of major sites mentioned in the text (map

by S. Grice).

In Sardinia, Phoenician pottery has been found in association with Greek pottery that may date to the late ninth century, notably at Sant'Imbenia (Oggiano 2000; see also Botto 2005), while at Torre Galli in southern Italy, scarabs, glass, faience, hemispherical bowls and a wheel-thrown jug of eastern types were found in the otherwise firmly indigenously characteristic assemblage of 950–875 BC date, a timescale also supported by ¹⁴C wiggle match dating (Pacciarelli 1999; Nijboer 2008: 430–31). While this may not indicate Phoenician residents at any of these sites at this time, it does reflect Phoenician knowledge of the Tyrrhenian region, and Tyrrhenian knowledge of the Phoenicians.

Firm evidence of direct Phoenician–Maltese awareness prior to the late eighth century is lacking. Material from the famous bell-shaped pit at Mtarfa (Figure 12.1), which may have been a funerary deposit, is often regarded as having stylistic connections to early Phoenician pottery, and a deep, double-spouted lamp of Phoenician form may have been part of the same context (Sagona 2002: 29–32; 2011: 414–15; cf. Vella 2005: 440–41). Yet the assemblage otherwise forms a homogeneous group that appears typical of the latest Bronze Age ceramic sequence, although the chronology is not well established: the phase, dubbed late Borġ in-Nadur, or Bah > rija, may fall anywhere between the eleventh, tenth or even ninth centuries BC (Sagona 2008: 500; 2011; Tanasi 2008; 2010; Recchia and Cazzella 2011; Tanasi and Vella, this volume). Furthermore, the lamp itself finds a number of parallels in late seventh-century contexts across the island (Vella 2005: 441). Vella notes that the excavator, Ward Perkins, changed his mind between his initial and subsequent reports on the site about the context being sealed, concluding that the lamp was intrusive material left by robbers (Ward-Perkins 1942: 34; Sagona 2008: 504, n. 70 responds by suggesting that Ward Perkins bowed to contemporary chronological perspectives of seventh-century colonisation). Furthermore, Vella notes that the fabric of the lamp itself, examined only macroscopically

thus far, is claimed as both an example of the local tradition and an import (Vella 2005: 441). Thus, the chronology of this context remains contested. A tomb on Gozo which contained Phoenician wares, Bronze Age pottery and a collection of bronze finger rings has not been fully published (Sagona 2002: 1122–23; 2008: 506). Finally, a scarab ring of Tuthmosis III (1479–1425 BC) found in association with late Borġ in-Nadur wares in a tomb in Buskett Gardens (tomb 68), traditionally regarded as evidence of general ‘eastern’ activity in Malta, is now considered an heirloom, as its date is very out of sequence with the rest of the tomb assemblage (Sagona 2002: 34). Other arguments for early contact rest on subjective stylistic similarities in some aspects of the Maltese ceramic repertoire (Sagona 2002: 29–39).

Chronologically secure evidence to herald the beginning of direct Phoenician engagement with Malta begins somewhere around the late eighth century and early seventh century, although even this, too, is scanty, for little of this period has been excavated. The earliest may be a tomb at Rabat (New Street tomb 432) and the Tas-Silġ sanctuary, from which several Near Eastern red slip and wheelmade sherds have been recovered that are dated to the second half of the eighth century (Sagona 2008: 504; 508–509; 513–20). At the settlement site of Mdina, in the middle of the island, some imported Phoenician red-slipped sherds of early seventh-century date have been found (Semeraro 2002: 506–507), while more recent excavations at Mesquita Square in Mdina also report early seventh-century imported Phoenician red slip pottery but remain largely unpublished (Sagona 2008: 507–508). Most evidence for contact during this period remains based upon the adaptation of Levantine shapes, such as lamps, hemispherical bowls, urns with handles from rim to shoulder, disc-topped (a ‘mushroom’ variant) jugs, trefoil jugs, narrow-necked conical jugs, and plates (Sagona 2002: 41–49; 2008: 513–22; 2011: 420–25) (Figure 12.2).

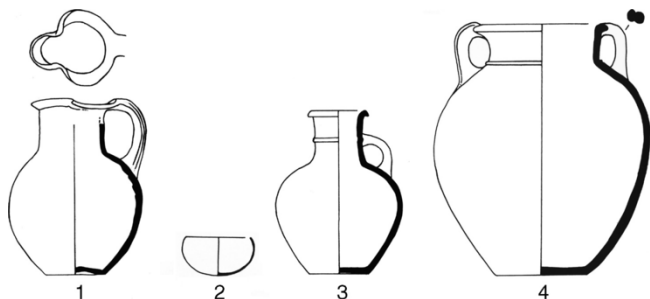


Figure 12.2. Levantine shapes from Malta (all redrawn by S. Grice): 1: Trefoil jug form I: 2c (after Sagona 2002: 661, n. 6). 2: Hemispherical bowl form I: I (after Sagona 2002: 660, n. 14); 3: Disc-topped jug form I: 3c (after Sagona 2002: 661, n. 7); 4: Urn form I: 5 (after Sagona 2002: 660, n. 4).

One of the most significant contexts is a tomb from Ghajnejn Qajjet. The tomb, used for two interments, includes Levantine imports, such as a dipper juglet, an oil flask, a tripod mortar and a pot stand. The tomb is dated to between the early and mid-seventh centuries by a Protocorinthian cup and East Greek bird bowl (Tomb 105: Sagona 2002: 39–41 with references; see also Semeraro 2002 and Vella 2005 for dates of the Greek vessels). A cremation burial at Mtarfa similarly contained eastern Mediterranean forms, such as a ‘mushroom’ flask and double-bowl incense cup, local pottery, and a Protocorinthian *kotyle* dated to the first quarter of the seventh century (burial 293: Sagona 2002: 46–47). Buskett Gardens Tomb 62 also had a Greek import alongside local vessels, including Near Eastern shapes, while Buskett Gardens Tomb 63 is considered to include Greek Protocorinthian *skyphos* cups (Sagona suggests that these examples are, in fact, local copies: Sagona 2002: 46–49; 2008: 515). It is widely assumed that the Greek wares were brought to Malta together with the Phoenician material by the Phoenicians themselves, who were known consumers of Greek pottery at this time and who are named in ancient sources as settling on Malta (e.g. Docter and Niemeyer 1994; Niemeyer 2003; 2004).

Most contemporary Phoenician material in Sicily comes from Motya, an island site off Sicily’s western coast founded

by Phoenicians at the end of the eighth century (Longo 1999: 43). Late eighth-century Phoenician material also appears in the earliest graves of the Greek colonies (red slip ware plates at Syracuse, Messina and Megara Hyblaea being among the earliest: Gras 1985; Ciasca 1991; Albanese Procelli 2006; a lamp from Syracuse: Pelagatti 1978: 130–31). Three local imitations of pilgrim flasks, a Near Eastern form, as well as Egyptian steatite scarabs among material in the chamber tombs of the late eighth-century Sikel regional stronghold of Villasmundo suggest that this hinterland was more widely engaged than just with the Greeks, which is its usual culture-contact contextualisation (Albanese Procelli 2006).

Famously, the Greeks do not appear to have settled on Malta, heading instead to Sicily during the eighth century BC. At Villasmundo, a pendent semi-circle *skyphos*, an early Thapsos *skyphos*, chevron *skyphoi* and an Aetos 666 *kotyle*, all of mid-eighth-century date, have been found (Hodos 2006: 94–95 with bibliography; other contemporary examples include a Thapsos *skyphos* from Modica and an imitation chevron *skyphos* from Cozzo della Tignusa. Alleged mid-eighth-century sherds from Syracuse and Megara Hyblaea are more likely late eighth century: Hodos 2006: 96–97). Material falling into the early colonial horizon of the last third of the eighth century has also been found in non-colonial contexts, such as *skyphos* and *kotyle* drinking shapes and the occasional amphora, at primarily sites in eastern Sicily such as Villasmundo, Finocchito, Modica and Morgantina (Hodos 2000: 45 with references; Albanese Procelli 1997: 517)

The reasons for the establishment of overseas settlements by both Phoenicians and Greeks, as cited in ancient sources and/or evidenced materially, are often economic, political and/or religious. There are numerous tales of both Greek and Phoenician colonies being founded for the specific purposes of facilitating resource acquisition, improved trade, agrarian exploitation, political instability, and religious encouragement and sanction (Hodos 2009: 228–33). While there is a well-known risk with taking literary sources at

face value, descriptions of the foundations of many of the settlements mentioned by later authors must represent some sort of historical action or trait that these historians could recognise in their own time and which their readership would understand and appreciate. In other words, these shared traits as described in literature can be taken to mean that ancient authors regarded these settlements as of similar type, origin or even historical standing. Such a view may find support in the shared general physical typology of such settlements. Many were situated on an offshore island or along a river delta, both of which accorded communication and mercantile efficiencies, and often access to fertile territory or irrigation prospects. Cemeteries were always somehow separated from the settlement, whether by a channel of water or a city wall. Specific differences were dictated by local circumstances (Hodos [2009](#)).

This is not to say that these were peaceful times. The dedication of a Sikel spear at the foundation of Syracuse's Athena temple reflects contemporary violent struggle (Orsi [1919](#): 519; the Greeks no longer buried their weapons by this period: van Wees [1998](#)). Weapons were found in the cremation burials of the earliest graves on Motya island itself and in the later graves of the Birgi necropolis, Motya's mainland cemetery now known to date to the eighth-century horizon (Spanò Giammellaro [2000a](#) with bibliography), while iron weapons from sixth-century Palermo were ritually bent to render them unusable (Tisseyre [1998](#); Albanese Procelli [2008](#): 467). Among the Sicilians themselves, weapon burials remained a tradition through the fifth century (Hodos [2006](#): 120 and n. 15 with references).

The Greeks and Phoenicians of Sicily and Malta

Since the mid-1990s, under the influence of post-colonial perspectives, research has emphasised the localised identities of colonial communities (Greeks: Shepherd [1995](#); [2000](#); de Angelis [2003](#); Antonaccio [2001](#); [2003](#); [2004](#); [2005](#); [2010](#); Phoenicians: Aubet [2001](#); Bierling [2002](#); van

Dommelen and Gómez Bellard 2008; Dietler and López-Ruiz 2009) and hybrid cultural developments in such culturally mixed environments (e.g. van Dommelen 1998; Dietler 2005; 2010; Hodos 2006). More recently, drawing upon globalisation theories, scholarship has begun to acknowledge shared colonisation processes between the Greeks and Phoenicians (Hodos 2009), although terminology remains problematic (for a variety of perspectives, see Osborne 1998; Hodos 2006: 13–22; Sagona 2008: 512, n. 108; De Angelis 2009; comparing Sagona and De Angelis, it is clear there is no single ‘correct’ view). Current emphasis (explicitly or implicitly) considers (1) the concurrent balance between globally shared practices and local expressions of difference, and (2) the multifaceted expressions of various social identities in such culturally mixed environments (Hodos 2010a; 2010b).

Sicily has been a particularly fruitful ground for such reinterpretations, especially with regard to Greek colonisation. Notably, this has been in the sphere of burial customs and pottery production. It has been observed that the Greek colonies of Sicily were engaged in competitive emulation with one another through their choice of tomb types. For example, in Syracuse, the elite, characterised by the extensive inclusion of imported ceramics and precious metal jewellery, favoured a monolithic stone-cut sarcophagus for the individual depositions of their dead, while the majority of the community used rock-cut trench (*fossa*) graves for their individual inhumations. At Megara Hyblaea, however, monolithic sarcophagi were used by the majority for their individual inhumations, while the hypogeum or rock-cut cella was reserved for most elite burials, which also included substantial quantities of gold. It has been argued that competition between these two communities fostered the progressive exclusivity of tomb type over the course of the seventh and sixth centuries (Shepherd 1995). Rather than slavishly copying their homeland traditions, these settlements were more concerned with their community status and respective expressions of elite standing in comparison with their colonial neighbours.

Even the goods within the graves, presumed to reflect social status display, suggest that the Greek colonial communities were constantly evolving and developing their own sense of identity. Colonial graves regularly included imported and locally produced versions of Greek originals, notably Corinthian types during the seventh century, and increasingly Attic ones during the sixth century, adhering closely to the original shapes but allowing the creativity of the local painters to develop explicitly colonial styles, which became associated with their city-states. This is a hybrid cultural development in its own right, since all the colonies created their own ceramic workshops to produce in local clays Greek vessel shapes with derivative decorative styles, rather than directly copying imported examples (Siracusano 1994; Antonaccio 2003: 71; 2010: 41). At the same time, these colonial communities imported ceramics extensively from across the Greek world and Italy. Peloponnesian, East Greek pottery and Italic *buccheri* are also commonly found in the graves of Syracuse's cemeteries, for example, and sometimes imitated. This contrasts with contemporary graves of Syracuse's mother-city, Corinth, which were furnished with almost exclusively Corinthian material until the second half of the fifth century, when Attic began to supplement Corinthian output. Such patterns suggest that, right from the beginning, the Sicilian Greeks sought to create and express an explicitly Sicilian Greek identity, witnessed not only in their ceramic output but also their funerary customs (Shepherd 1995; Antonaccio 2003: 67–72).

The Phoenicians of Sicily used a more diverse range of ceramics. At Motya, for example, Phoenician-type wares, such as red slip table ware, amphora forms, cooking pots and lamps, appear alongside Greek and Greek-colonial wares, local varieties (Famà and Toti 2000) and even indigenous pottery (in the *tophet* and at the foundation level of the island's Cappiddazzu sanctuary: Longo 1999: 45). At sixth-century Palermo, Corinthian transport amphoras, Massalian wine jars and even some Etruscan *buccheri* cups (and *unguentaria*) were imported (Di Stefano 1999: 232), suggesting that the residents of this community had an international taste in drink and the vessels they used for its

consumption.

The most popular ceramic forms were not those of the eastern Mediterranean but rather those regionally produced and circulated (Hodos 2006: 132–33). Central Mediterranean Phoenician workshops produced wares that were variations of eastern prototypes (Spanò Giammellaro 2000b; Albanese Procelli 2008). The main forms include bichrome geometric amphoras; ‘mushroom’ jugs; trefoil-lipped jugs; urns; and plates that evolve from a short to broad lip between the late eighth and early seventh centuries; one-handled spherical pots; and small pots with a single loop handle spanning the side and with an opposing knob lug, locally produced in the Phoenician settlements of Sicily (Albanese Procelli 2008: 472–73). Seventh-century grave gifts at Motya demonstrate remarkable similarity to those of contemporary Carthage, which include a trefoil-rim jug and a ‘mushroom’-rim jug, two one-handled cooking pots and possibly a Protocorinthian drinking cup (Motya: Albanese Procelli 2008: 468; Carthage: Maass-Lindemann 2005: 108–109). Rather than suggesting that such a range of wares connotes a sense of poverty, especially when compared with the range available in Phoenicia or Cyprus (Ciasca 1991: 185), this pattern should be regarded as a regional expression of shared central Mediterranean Phoenician identity. In sum, ceramic development in both Greek and Phoenician Sicily should be regarded as forms of hybridisation (Antonaccio 2001).

Presenting similar arguments for Malta is difficult for hardly any context can be identified as culturally Phoenician. Furthermore, pottery of eastern Mediterranean origin hardly appears (the notable exception is Gh>ajn Qajjet Tomb 105). The sporadic funerary contexts with largely imitative Levantine pottery alongside traditional Maltese forms renders it impossible to say if such shapes were made by the local Maltese inhabitants or eastern Mediterranean newcomers who used the local clay to reproduce familiar forms (Sagona 2002: 32; 2008: 511). This is certainly the case for Mellieh>a tomb 215, which has such close shape parallels to examples from Tyre al-Bass –

including an urn with an everted, angular rim and handles from rim to shoulder, a non-drooping ‘mushroom’ jug, a piriform trefoil jug, bowls and a single nozzle lamp, which remains a unique find in Malta – that the grave is often considered to have been prepared for a foreign settler or someone with very close ties to the Phoenician homeland (Sagona 2011: 418–25 with references). The burial is dated to the second half of the eighth century and early seventh-century horizon on the basis of its assemblage similarities to Tyre al-Bass Period IV. Not all the material from this burial is of Phoenician type, however, for a one-handed pot with opposing knob on the shoulder is a long-lived Maltese form. Thus, this example is better regarded as a hybridising burial rather than an aberrant Levantine grave. More generally speaking, extant traditional Maltese styles include small pots with a single loop handle spanning the side and with an opposing knob lug; omphalos bases; shallow trays; and a baggy urn shape with opposing horizontal loop handles (the crescent motif, seen on a Mtarfa vessel and cited by Sagona 2008: 505–506 as another traditional style is, in fact, part of a sinuous line: Vella, pers. comm. On Borġ in-Nadur pottery generally, see Tanasi 2008; 2010; Recchia and Cazzella 2011). As noted above, shapes inspired by eastern Mediterranean forms include the ‘mushroom’ rim with a level, rather than drooping, lip; the piriform jug with trefoil rim; the hemispherical bowl; and an urn form with handles from rim to shoulder. These forms and traditional vessel shapes are sometimes manufactured with red slip, which elsewhere is assumed to be an indicator of Levantine imports. Yet red slip is an independent feature of Malta’s Bronze Age pottery industry, and therefore may simply reflect continuity of potting traditions (Sagona 2008: 504; it no longer indicates Phoenician craftsmen in the Near East, either: Hodos *et al.* 2005: 70; Hodos 2006: 39 with references). Nevertheless, these eighth-century changes to the ceramic assemblage soon develop into a standard Maltese repertoire that lasts for the next few centuries, a corpus which may be characterised as culturally hybrid (Sagona 2002: 26; 2011: 418–28; Quercia 2011).

Malta became and remained closely tied to the Phoenician

communities of the central Mediterranean, for changes seen elsewhere are also noted here. Burial forms is one such example. Cremation was the primary traditional burial method in Phoenicia, although not exclusively. In Sicily, Phoenicians preferred cremation burials during the eighth and seventh centuries. Both primary and secondary cremations have been recorded at Palermo, for example. During the first half of the sixth century, these communities began to adopt inhumation practices, with single cists appearing at Palermo, while a more complex form with niches and headrests was preferred at Solunto (Greco 1997a; 1997b), perhaps indicative of competitive emulation between these two communities. Quadrilateral chamber tombs were also used at Palermo, with the deceased interred inside sarcophagi within the chambers (Di Stefano 1999: 232; 2009). In Malta, it appears that cremation, common at least by the early seventh century, began to fall out of favour at the end of the century, disappearing altogether by the end of the sixth century (Sagona 2002: 33, 52, 54). The chamber tombs used for the deposition of the dead (whether cremated or inhumed) were initially round, apsidal or oval, developing increasingly elaborate features, although by the end of the sixth century, a more standardised square or rectangular chamber was preferred (Sagona 2002: 237–42). The change towards inhumation from cremation accompanied by an increased variety of tomb forms also occurs on contemporary Sardinia, where cremation burials become replaced by inhumation burials in trench tombs, chest graves and chamber tombs (van Dommelen 1998: 124–25). This coincides with similar developments at Carthage, where inhumation in various tomb forms is introduced during the middle of the seventh century, replacing cremation altogether by the middle of the sixth century (Bénichou-Safar 1982). This multifaceted development (burial custom plus tomb forms) appears to be a concurrent pattern exclusive to the Phoenician communities along the Tyrrhenian–Carthaginian axis, as opposed to the Greeks or other populations.

These are thus best associated with broader Phoenician trends rather than resulting from specific influence by or

competition with neighbouring Greek communities, which one would otherwise expect to have developed in Sicily first and spread out, since this was the area where Greeks and Phoenicians were most closely settled to one another. More explicitly, this trend may be regarded as a herald of Carthaginian domination over the central Mediterranean region (van Dommelen and Gómez Bellard 2008: 8), for this pattern occurs alongside the spread of typically Carthaginian domestic pottery and ritual practices (e.g. decorated ostrich eggs as grave gifts: Pisano 2002).

A sense of developing cultural identities can also be seen in the architecture of the colonial built environments. Despite the fact that apsidal and oval structures were known in the Greek homeland during the eighth century (Mazarakis Ainian 1997), and circular forms were common among the Sicilian populations when the Greeks arrived, these were not used in the Sicilian Greek settlements. The original colonial houses were generally little more than 16 sq m box-shape structures, sometimes with an internal bench (e.g. Naxos; Syracuse; Megara Hyblaea: Domínguez 2006). Very quickly, multi-roomed rectilinear houses became common, sometimes with enclosed courtyard space (e.g. Megara Hyblaea: De Angelis 2003: 20–33). Urban planning is indicated from the beginning of these settlements, judging by layout of the earliest houses along articulated roadways (e.g. Syracuse: Domínguez 2006: 272 with references) and the planning of communal storage silos (e.g. Megara Hyblaea: De Angelis 2002).

The earliest Phoenician houses on Sicily are known from late eighth-century Motya, where they were quadrangular in form, although of a slightly more generous proportion than their Greek counterparts. Courtyards became a more common feature during the seventh century. Like their Greek counterparts, urban planning from the beginning of the settlement is implied by the placement of silos that date to the late eighth century (e.g. Famà 2002). This should not be taken as evidence of imitation, but rather of practicalities and extant common practice (Hodos 2009). Similar characteristics can be found in early Carthage, including

courtyard houses, a sense of urban planning and communal wells (Niemeyer *et al.* 2007: 175–92). Urban architectural evidence from Malta is still lacking.

Cultural Engagements between Colonising and Existing Local Communities

The permanent presence of Greeks and Phoenicians in the central Mediterranean led to the widespread exchange of goods, practices and ideas between these foreigners and the extant local populations. This is most evident in three aspects of the archaeological record: burial customs, architecture and, especially, the ceramic repertoire. Sicily's particularly rich data set facilitates insight into the processes of material and ideological exchange and the expression of local identities in the increasingly connected Mediterranean during this period.

The methods of interment by the Phoenicians and Greeks were markedly different from the practice of multiple inhumation in communal chamber tombs that typified contemporary Sicilian burial customs (Albanese Procelli 2003: 164–75; Hodos 2006: 113–21). Shortly after the arrival of the foreign settlers, the Sicilian communities began to modify their burial practices, adopting cremation and single inhumation, introducing sarcophagus (of stone slabs, terracotta or rock cut) and pitched tile receptacles for the latter, or using elevated biers for individuals within larger chambers. None can be associated with elevated social display, however, for their grave goods are not significantly more prestigious, and these new methods were often used side by side with traditional ones. At Morgantina, for example, chamber tombs were used regularly into the fifth century, and both single inhumations and cremations were interred in the floor of the chamber. Furthermore, these particular burials did not have any greater proportion of imported pottery; if anything, the opposite is true (Lyons 1996). Thus, methods of interment on their own may have been the community's choice of status display, rather than

the grave goods, or may better relate to personal histories and cultural backgrounds than social standing within the community.

Architectural influence can be observed in the introduction of multi-roomed rectilinear structures for domestic occupation during the seventh century, judging by the few settlements known of this period, such as Vassallaggi and Sabucina (rectilinear structures were not unknown in Sicily before this time, but they tended to be sizeable and not subdivided by walls, although activity divisions are evident: Albanese Procelli [2003](#): 147–48). There is much more extensive evidence for the sixth century, when a number of Sicilian settlements adopted formal urban features associated with the colonial settlements, notably multi-roomed rectangular houses articulated within an orthogonal road framework, the construction of a city wall, and sometimes a dedicated agora-type area (e.g. Monte Saraceno di Ravenusa, Monte Bubbonia, Monte Iato, Ramacca: Hodos [2006](#): 99–112 with references). Furthermore, during the same period, a number of Sicilian religious structures also adopt Greek temple forms, and the same variations observable in the Greek colonial temples of Sicily are replicated in the Sicilian versions (Siracusano [1989](#); Marconi [2007](#)), reflecting commonly shared notions of religious architecture. Yet the traditional circular building that characterised Bronze Age Sicilian settlements continued to be constructed and used during the eighth, seventh and sixth centuries, although increasingly they were reserved only for religious structures and were of a sufficiently substantial size so as to be suitable for community-wide participation (e.g. Polizzello; Montagnoli; Monte Polizzo; Sabucina: most recently, Hodos [2010a](#) with references). This suggests that some communities chose to adopt a form of religious practice that explicitly recalled indigenous tradition and that materialised and legitimated power through communal religious practices (Hodos [2010a](#)).

With regard to Sicilian ceramic consumption, from the eighth century, the Sicilians augmented their own ceramic

repertoire with drinking cups (*skyphoi* and *kotylai*) and pouring shapes (*oinochoai*) produced in both the Greek colonies and the wider Greek world (similar to the import pattern observed in the colonies themselves, noted above). Yet not all shapes that were popular in the colonies were favoured among the Sicilians. Mixing shapes, such as the krater, were not widely utilised until the late sixth century, indicating that the practices in which mixing shapes were needed by Sicilians differed from Greek customs, in which the krater was an essential part of ritual eating and drinking assemblages. Similarly, small unguent containers were not of interest to the Sicilian communities of eastern Sicily, despite their abundant use in the Greek colonies of eastern Sicily and Greek willingness to sell them elsewhere (their typology, in fact, derives from the extensive quantities retrieved from the cemeteries of Syracuse and Megara Hyblaea: most recently, Hodos [2010a](#)). Interestingly, communities in central Sicily did display greater interest in these vessels and their contents (Hodos [2000](#)). Sicilian use of Phoenician-style pottery is less evident, although it can be seen primarily in central and western contexts (e.g. Sabucina and Colle Madore: Greco 1997c; 2000 with bibliography). Pottery from other Sicilian communities was also used. Antonaccio has identified vessels from Marianopoli in west-central Sicily among the Morgantina assemblage (Antonaccio [2004](#): 73), while stamped and incised wares associated particularly with western Sicily had a distribution across the island, including as far east as Morgantina, Butera and Paternò (Spatafora [1996](#): fig. 3).

Sicilian potters quickly began to incorporate Greek-style shapes into their own repertoire. The trefoil oinochoe was a form popular in both Greek colonial and Sicilian contexts, especially between the seventh and fifth centuries, during which period its Sicilian production evolved from a globular to a more streamlined profile. Over the same timeframe, however, the decoration remained fixed to motifs of the seventh century. Regional decorative preferences can be observed, as well, because the geometric and organic motifs found on imported Protocorinthian, Corinthian and Rhodian wares were copied in the output of central Sicily, while only

linear motifs were preferred in the output of eastern Sicily (most recently, Hodos 2010a with references), perhaps as regional expressions of shared social (community) identity articulated through ceramic style. At the same time, local artists often combined forms and decorative styles seen in the pottery around the colonies to produce distinctly hybrid products. One such example is a krater from sixth-century Sabucina (Figure 12.3). The shape is modelled on an Attic form, while the clay has been rendered to imitate Corinthian fabric. A pair of wild animals painted within a single frieze panel occupy the body of either side of the vessel. Pairs of wild animals recall a popular contemporary Corinthian motif, but Greek (and Greek colonial) examples always have details of the animals' bodies incised and fill the surrounding space with floral ornaments. The combination of features here, however, is decidedly new (most recently, Hodos 2010a with references). Corresponding Phoenician ceramic influence on Sicilian production cannot be seen easily before the fifth century, by which time it is specifically Punic in character and bound with the political and military circumstances of that period.



Figure 12.3. Sixth century BC krater from Sabucina (drawing by S. Grice).

The Greek and Phoenician colonists were firm consumers of one another's goods from the foundation of their settlements, including perishable products and vessels for their consumption. Phoenician-type red slip ware plates and transport amphoras produced at Motya, Palermo and Solunto have been found at Himera, Megara Hyblaea, Lipari,

Camarina, Mylai, Zancle, Messina, Milazzo, Sant'Angelo Muxaro and Syracuse, where a specifically Carthaginian amphora was discovered in the Athena temple (Orsi 1919: fig. 55; see also Ciasca 1988–89: 77–78; Falsone 1988: 44; Leighton 1999: 231; Albanese Procelli 2008: 471, 475–77). A Phoenician amphora form of the first half of the sixth century with a specific distribution in southern Spain (Ramón 10.1.2.1: Ramón Torres 1995) appears at Motya and Himera, providing an indication of the extent of Sicily's engagement with the Mediterranean (see also Albanese Procelli 2008: 477 with references; other eastern goods also found their way into the Greek colonies, including faience vessels, stone scarabs, lamps and other vessels originating in Egypt and Cyprus, although these are uncommon: Guzzardi 1991). In the settlement of Motya, Greek and colonial pottery, notably Protocorinthian and colonial imitations, Attic SOS amphoras and so-called Ionian bowls, have also been found (Famà and Toti 2000), and Thapsos panel *skyphoi* of the second half of the eighth century were interred in the settlement's earliest graves (Di Stefano 2005: 595–96). The widespread distribution of Greek transport amphoras across and throughout the island indicates that Greek, Phoenician and Sicilian communities were all participating consumers (Albanese Procelli 1996: fig. 1).

Shared goods extend to metalwork. One particularly interesting example is the identification of rectangular bronze graters in several Palermo tombs of the sixth and fifth centuries (Spanò Giammellaro 1998: 155, 192, 383, n. 188, 405, n. G 78–83). These are mentioned in Homeric literature as a necessary implement for the grating of cheese into a medicinal mixture of wine and barley, notably in the *Iliad* (xi, 628–43), where the wounded Machaon is offered such a beverage after being struck by an arrow. They appear in funerary contexts associated with the Euboeans as early as the ninth century (at Lefkandi), and also in Etruscan, South Italic and Sicilian graves from the eighth century down to the third century, always in burials associated with the local male elite (Ridgway 1997). They are regarded as another indicator of shared or similar social practices between the Greeks and their Italic neighbours; now we can add the

Phoenicians (perhaps the custom was introduced at multicultural eighth-century Pithekoussai, where Euboeans and Phoenicians were co-resident: Ridgway 1992; Docter and Niemeyer 1994: 103–104).

Such exchange extended to the local communities from the beginning of colonial settlement, and may be taken to reflect their interest in engaging with the wider Mediterranean via their new neighbours. Villasmundo provides an excellent example. The site possesses the earliest Greek material to date from Sicily, discussed above, as well as an early, rare, local imitation of a Greek krater form (Hodos 2000: 51; Voza 1978: pl. 26.2) alongside traditional local forms. Other material includes three local imitations of the Near Eastern pilgrim flask, jewellery of Near Eastern or Cypriot types, and steatite scarabs from the eastern Mediterranean (Albanese Procelli 2003: 134–35).

The early Sikel-produced imitations of a Greek krater and Phoenician pilgrim flasks suggest a complex network of social engagement. First, the artisan has to have seen Greek and Phoenician examples to copy the forms; no other examples have been recovered from the site. Second, there is the issue of the desire to replicate such objects and the reasons behind this. Most likely it is because the vessels could satisfy a function that accorded well with local customs, although concurrently these vessels introduced notions of social values and customs associated with their use in their original social environments. This contributed to the creation of new social media that connected the Sicilian communities with their colonial neighbours. That such interest derived from the local communities themselves might also be argued for with regard to the double interment tomb from Ghajnejon Qajjet on Malta, the only Maltese context to date in which Greek material has been found alongside imported Phoenician wares. Indigenous communities were aware of both the Greeks and Phoenicians through their material, and the producers, or at least middlemen traders, were aware of their developing markets. This implies a connected system they inhabited together concurrently.

Connectivity is most clearly seen regionally, however, rather than directly with the eastern Mediterranean or Greece, especially for non-coastal settlements. Furthermore, it is clear that there was an explicit north–south route between the Tyrrhenian and Carthage via Sicily and Malta. Pilgrim flasks and scarabs circulated also on Sardinia and Ischia (Pithekoussai) during this period (Voza 1999: 63 with bibliography; Bartoloni 2002: 251; Lo Schiavo 2003, 154). Furthermore, Pithekoussan imitations of *skyphos* and *kotyle* drinking cups, and *oinochoe* jugs of varying sizes have been found in the eighth- and seventh-century strata of urban Carthage (Docter and Niemeyer 1994: 104–108). Much more extensive at Carthage are more than 800 transport amphoras from Etruscan Italy, most likely containing wine, and more than 60 Etruscan *bucchero* vessels of varying shapes (Docter and Niemeyer 1994: 108–109). In fact, central Italian amphoras and fine wares dominate Carthaginian imports until the middle of the seventh century, when they are replaced with substantially lesser quantities of *bucchero* and Etrusco-Corinthian wares (Docter and Niemeyer 1994: 109 and 114), suggesting that wine from central Italy was no longer extensively imported to Carthage after this time. This development coincides with a change in ceramic fabric composition at Carthage ca. 650 BC (Amadori and Fabbri 1998; see also Vegas 1999; Mansel 1999). Together, they imply a change in social emphasis in Carthage mid-seventh century (further discussion lies beyond the scope of the present work). A small number of Greek vessels complement the corpus (Trias 1999; Kourou 2003). This suggests that the bulk of the trade along this north–south route was primarily between central Italy and Carthage; that a north–south route included Sicily and Malta is supported by the fact that the imported early seventh-century Phoenician red-slipped pottery from Mesquita Square, Mdina, was found alongside a piece of Sicilian Finocchito ware (730–650 BC: Semeraro 2002: 506–507).

There is also evidence of a direct east–west route from Italy to the western Mediterranean that largely bypassed Sicily. This is suggested by evidence from southern France, where wine was extensively imported in Etruscan amphoras,

and its preferred consumption vessel was the imported Etruscan-made *bucchero kantharos* shape (Dietler 2005: 41–47). The occasional piece of eighth-century Pithekoussan pottery in southern Spain, and several fragments of pottery typical of the output of the Phoenician settlements of Spain found at Pithekoussai, along with an Iberian *fibula* (Döcker and Niemeyer 1994: 109–10 and 113 with references), suggest that the east–west route had eighth-century origins.

Ceramic production and consumption demonstrate an even more regional central Mediterranean *koine*. Similarities can be seen in particular between the grave gifts of Phoenician Sicily, Malta, and contemporary Carthage, where seventh-century funerary assemblages typically included a mushroom-topped jar and a trefoil-lipped jug, a Protocorinthian *kylix* and a one-handled cooking pot or two (Malta and Motya: Sagona 2002: 45–47; Motya and Carthage: Albanese Procelli 2008: 468). Indeed, the cooking pots themselves suggest a close relationship explicitly between Sicilian and Maltese producers, for the flat-based squat pot with lug handles was in use on both islands during the late eighth and seventh centuries (Albanese Procelli 2008: 472–73). Furthermore, the double-bowl incense cup is attested at Phoenician Solunto and indigenous Sant’Angelo Muxaro on Sicily, and at Mtarfa on Malta (Albanese Procelli 2008: 475 with references). Finally, a single-spout lamp of Phoenician form appears to have been produced at Gela, originally a Greek colony, and is attested on Malta, and at Carthage (Gela: Albanese Procelli 2008: 471; Carthage: most recently Kourou 2003: 95, fig. 7; Malta: Sagona 2002: fig. 340, form I:2).

Although sharing characteristics, local production was not identical in each place. For example, pottery from late eighth- and early seventh-century Motya utilises slightly different forms to Maltese parallels: the level-lipped ‘mushroom’ jugs have a more bell-shaped body; piriform jugs are wider; amphoras narrow more sharply towards the base (Albanese Procelli 2008: 472). Furthermore, bichrome, popular at Motya, does not appear to have been used in Malta, while plates, not uncommon in Maltese graves, did

not form part of the burial assemblage at Motya (cf. Albanese Procelli 2008 with Sagona 2008).

Conclusions

Throughout the Mediterranean, Greek and Phoenician material is often found together, suggesting that traders knew their consumers, although we cannot say that pottery reflects its traders' identities, especially as we know that ship cargoes were mixed (Hodos 2009: 224). Furthermore, there is a long-standing tradition of exchange between micro-regions as a means of moving goods from further reaches of the Mediterranean (e.g. Horden and Purcell 2000). Such micro-regional trade routes have a long history in the central Mediterranean. One such example is the metalworking *koiné* between Sicily and Italy, which has firm Bronze Age traditions (Leighton 1999: 208) and was maintained during the Iron Age, indicated by south Italian spears, axes, pendants and figurines in several early eighth-century deposits across Sicily (Hodos 1999: 72–73 with references). The likelihood is that the Near Easterners and Greeks within the Tyrrhenian participated in the extant exchange networks, rather than creating new ones. Sea routes and landing places must have played a role in the settlement decisions the Phoenicians and Greeks made (e.g. Vella 2004, who illustrates the significance of topographic features and their toponymic significance as metaphors with cultural meaning).

The shared landscape of Sicily created a middle ground of engagement. The adoption and reinterpretation of foreign elements enabled social display that could be recognised and understood by all interacting parties. This created demand for goods and products across the island by all its cultural groups, each importing and imitating objects and ideas from one another. Perhaps it was because there was an abundance of Phoenician settlements along the north–south trade axis that Phoenician-led engagement throughout Sicily is less pronounced, their focus remaining seaward. In contrast, the distribution of contemporary early Greek settlements created a circumstance that encouraged the Greeks to criss-cross the

landscape in their mercantile and territorial pursuits, expanding further west across the island over time. The intense Phoenician influence across Malta is perhaps to be expected given its proximity to Carthage. Its small size may also have deterred Greeks from settling there, as co-existence may have been too close for comfort.

It is widely recognised that the Sicilian communities developed hybrid cultural expressions, whether specifically colonial versions of Greek or Phoenician culture, or the increasingly more Mediterranean-engaged articulation of Sicilian identities, especially during the eighth, seventh and sixth centuries. Our understanding of the nature of the hybrid cultural developments in Malta is hindered by the fact that so little is known archaeologically from the first half of the first millennium BC. Our knowledge of settlement patterns across Malta during this time is patchy; any major settlement probably underlies a modern city, such as Mdina-Rabat, considering the distribution of rock-cut tomb groups (Vella 2007: 70–73). Presumably, the countryside similarly was settled, although evidence so far suggests not extensively; occupation remained relatively clustered around Mdina-Rabat (Spanò Giammellaro *et al.* 2008: 153, 158). It is likely there was a significant population to support the development of the Tas-Silġ sanctuary (Spanò Giammellaro *et al.* 2008: 155), although the sanctuary's nature and size before the sixth century is hardly known.

Aubet (2001: 235) has suggested that the ceramic assemblage of Malta is morphologically related more to that of the western Mediterranean than the central Mediterranean of Sardinia, Sicily and Carthage, perhaps stemming from a separate origin of the Phoenicians. In fact, the assessment here demonstrates that the relationship during the eighth, seventh and sixth centuries is with the central Mediterranean. It is more likely, therefore, that these central Mediterranean Phoenicians shared a common origin. Indeed, residents of both Motya and Euboean Pithekoussai at the end of the eighth century used a surprisingly similar variety of ceramics, including Ibero-Phoenician, Greek (including Rhodian and Argive, as well as Corinthian) and

Italic wares alongside Phoenician styles; the Phoenician residents of Motya may have been part of the same group who settled at Pithekoussai (Ciasca 1990: 121; Longo 1999: 46). Sulcis, on Sardinia, may also be included in this (Bernardini 2009). They all may well have shared origins with the late ninth-century settlers at Carthage.

The famous conflicts between the Greeks and Phoenicians in Sicily, which often involved the local populations, notably the Elymians, would not necessarily have affected Malta directly, but may have interrupted regular trade and communication. Transport and storage amphoras are not represented in the tombs of the sixth century, their funerary function being replaced by local barrel urns, suggesting that pottery was not imported to Malta during this time (Sagona 2008: 524). This may correspond to Carthaginian activity in Sicily and the Tyrrhenian, speculatively reflecting a diversion of transport sailing craft to alternative, military-related transportation duties. It may also have given rise to the standardisation of funerary equipment in Malta by the fifth century, which included a jug, lamp, bowl and urn, and often duplication of some forms (Sagona 2002: 52).

In sum, the settlement and material culture patterns from Sicily and Malta reveal the intensity of contacts between colonisers and indigenous inhabitants, which were thoroughly entwined through the intermingling of cultural traditions and practices (Spanò Giammellaro *et al.* 2008: 158). Ultimately, this gave way to Sicily becoming the central ground for confrontation between Greece and Carthage in the fifth century, which heralds the next major phase of Mediterranean history: the Punic period.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the editors for their kind invitation to contribute to the present volume. I also would like to thank Peter van Dommelen, Silke Knippschild, Davide Tanasi and Nick Vella for valuable suggestions and recommendations.

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13 The Iron Age in South Italy: Settlement, Mobility and Culture Contact

Massimo Osanna

Abstract

In a study concerned with understanding the types of population and modes of contact in the multiple ecosystems of Iron Age southern Italy, ranging from the Greek poleis of the coastal flood plains to the Apennine mountain regions of Calabria and Lucania, it is necessary to examine the contexts carefully, as each culture or cultural or social group and every region may react differently to contacts with other cultures. Particularly instructive in this respect is the picture that emerges from the Ionian coast between Taras and Sybaris and its immediate hinterland, where it is possible to compare and differentiate realities that are not necessarily homogeneous or fully standardised.

This chapter discusses three different contexts along the Ionian coast, namely L'Amastuola, Incoronata and Francavilla Marittima, where the traditional reconstruction of the settlement dynamics, as proposed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, saw the presence of Greeks as a disruptive element which shattered a static indigenous situation and that led first to the conquest and subjugation of the indigenous inhabitants who lived around the immediate hinterland of the colonial settlements, and then resulted in full-blown inter-ethnic conflict. This perspective interpreted the clear traces of transformations between the late eighth and seventh centuries in the indigenous settlements around the area later occupied

by the Greek chorai as evidence of local communities succumbing to the impact of the Greek arrival. In this chapter, I will first discuss this traditional reconstruction, with particular attention to the inland regions of the Apennine mountains, before considering mobility and cultural contact in the Italic world and exploring the settlements and developments of indigenous communities between Iron Age I and II. I will focus in particular on the site of Torre di Satriano, where exceptional remains have been found in recent years.

Introduction: Between Colonisation and Decolonisation

The last few decades of research on the ancient Mediterranean have seen a general ‘rediscovery’ of people other than the Greeks, who had dominated scholarly interests and attention for much of the last century. The new focus on cultural plurality is leading to a huge broadening of perspectives and expansion of research topics and approaches (e.g. van Dommelen 1998). In Italy, these discussions build on a tradition of studies that go back to the 1960s and that have made significant contributions to our knowledge of indigenous societies and cultures in south Italy in particular. Kick-started in 1961 by a conference in Taranto about *Greci e indigeni in Magna Grecia* and developed by extensive fieldwork ever since, the relationships between peoples of different cultures and origins from the time of the first Greek migrations have been the topic of a long-running and intense debate (Vallet 1967; de la Genière 1970; 1974; Torelli 1977; Di Vita 1982; Cortona Conference 1983; Bottini 1986; Lepore 1989; Greco 1992; Finley and Lepore 2000). A key point of reference in the Italian debate is the conference *Confini e Frontiera nella Grecità d’Occidente* in 1997 (Taranto Conference 1999). In recent years, new theoretical approaches have come to enrich these discussions, inspired by developments in the English-speaking world that take their cue from other disciplines such as anthropology to explore the complexities of defining

ethnic groups and culture contact (Lomas 2004; Owen 2005; Hodos 2006). One notable strand among these contributions is the endeavour to decolonise the past (Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002), but a much bigger impact was made by the publication of Horden and Purcell's (2000) *The Corrupting Sea*. This book looked beyond Braudel to propose a new globalising vision of the Mediterranean as a region characterised by a fluidity of communications that enabled very high levels of mobility, which they termed 'connectivity'. The ensuing debate has given rise to new views on long-standing themes such as urbanisation in different cultural contexts, and it has taken the debate well beyond the Greek world (Osborne and Cunliffe 2005). Ian Morris (2003) has subsequently introduced the notion of Mediterraneanisation as a dynamic process of integration in a geographical context marked by a dynamic distinction between winners and losers, between those who adapt to new ways and those who stay behind (see now Etienne 2010).

At least one lesson can be learned from such new approaches: culture contacts must be understood in terms of their complexity and dynamism, and the meeting between Greeks and indigenous peoples should not be regarded as the clash between civilisations as monolithic blocks, as Coarelli (1972) already warned. Cultures are never intrinsically static. They are subject to hybridisation processes, and contacts generate mixed cultures (Fabietti 1998: 51–55). A point of view which focuses on a Hellenocentric overvaluation of the data and Greek sources can dangerously misrepresent the historical reality underlying the archaeological artefacts. In short, Greek 'primacy', if it ever existed, needs to be contextualised and compared with other 'firsts', and never generalised as a hermeneutical presupposition.

In order to understand the types of population and contact in the multiple ecosystems of Iron Age south Italy, ranging from the Greek *polis* of the coastal flood plains to the Apennine mountains of Calabria and Lucania, close examination of the contexts concerned is indispensable, as

each culture or cultural and social group and every region or subregion may react differently to contact with other cultures. If the original contexts and ecological structures of the various areas are different, foreign contacts will result in as many different outcomes. This is also true for ‘colonisation’, which is a convenient label to understand the differences between the Greek and Phoenician diasporas in the ancient Mediterranean and the forms of conquest and territorial, political and economic transformations that are part of modern colonisation (Lombardo 2000). Each single context needs to be considered carefully to grasp the characteristics of each place and each experience of contact, before drawing conclusions about the nature of the phenomena.

Particularly instructive in this respect is the picture that emerges from the Ionian coast between Taras and Sybaris and its immediate hinterland, where it is possible to compare and to differentiate between realities that are not necessarily homogeneous or completely standardised (Figure 13.1). If we start from the Tarentine context, the traditional reconstruction of the settlement dynamics, as proposed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, saw the presence of Spartan colonies as the disruptive element that shattered a static indigenous situation and that led first to the conquest of the indigenous inhabitants who lived around the *apoikia* and then resulted in large-scale inter-ethnic conflict (Osanna 1992). This perspective regarded the clear traces of transformations between the late eighth and seventh centuries in the indigenous settlements around the area later occupied by the Tarentine *chora* as evidence of defeat and collapse of the local communities under the impact of the arriving Greeks.



Figure 13.1. Map of the Ionian coast of south Italy between Taras and Sybaris and its immediate hinterland.

Settlement Dynamics and Culture Contact along the Ionian Coast (Eighth– Sixth Centuries BC)

An emblematic case is that of L'Amastuola, 14 km northwest of Taranto, where the first investigations reconstructed an indigenous settlement, built during the course of the eighth century BC and abandoned by the end of the century to be substituted by a Greek village as part of the chora of Taras (Maruggi 1996). These changes were signalled by the

disappearance of indigenous products such as matt-painted ceramics and its replacement by Greek-style pottery, and the transition from oval huts to square single-roomed houses on stone foundations. Furthermore, the archaeologically invisible indigenous burials, which are a typical feature of the Salento peninsula, were replaced by formal Greek-style burials with the creation of a cemetery in 675 BC, which, according to the Greek model, was separated from the settlement, whilst Apulian tombs continued to be built close to the houses, even as late as the Classical period.

The picture that emerges from recent research by the Free University of Amsterdam is rather more complex and is now presented in terms of cultural continuity and hybridisation. The birth of the community, according to the new investigations, would have taken place at the same time as the Hellenic migrations around the end of the eighth century BC, and it would have been mixed from the start, whilst maintaining its independence from Taranto until the fifth century. The new research therefore does not see the creation of a 'colonial' territory but rather an expansion of vibrant indigenous communities who identified new landscapes to inhabit and exploit and who welcomed the Greek newcomers in a profitable and equal relationship. Although stimulated by the foreign arrivals, local people remained in charge of organising the settlement in a context of strong and precocious Greek 'acculturation' (Burgers and Crielaard 2008; 2011: 133–58): a 'creolisation' of the society, where there was no clear break or qualitative difference with respect to the dynamic settlements already active in the indigenous world. Indigenous prominence is demonstrated in this view by the so-called *agger* or indigenous fortification system that encircled the town in the first half of the seventh century, and the continued use of indigenous pottery, alongside Greek products, until the very end of the seventh century, much later than initially thought (Figure 13.2). In the cemetery, which was in use between 675 and the fifth century BC, a so-called 'Messapian' stele added to the indigenous appearance of the community. It has also been demonstrated that the small rectangular Greek-style houses of the second half of the

seventh century not only replaced older oval dwellings, but also co-existed in at least one instance with these indigenous-style huts.

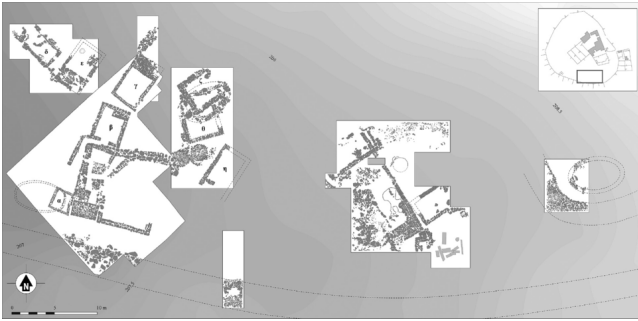


Figure 13.2. Plan of the site of L'Amastuola (Taranto).

This reconstruction emphasises the high level of organisation of the indigenous communities and their crucial role in processes of landscape transformation during the eighth century. Moreover, the entire region of the Murgia area and the Salento peninsula were densely occupied when the Greeks arrived, and they were directly affected by the processes that led to the formation of new settlements, thus documenting the intense vitality of the local communities (D'Andria 1988; 1991; Burgers 1998; Burgers and Recchia 2009). However, even if the overall reconsideration of the role of indigenous people in the creation of new hybrid communities is a positive aspect, the proposed reconstruction is not without its problems. First, it should be noted that if the coast was frequented by the 'proto-colonial' Greeks, it should be justly considered as only one of the multiple factors and causes that determined the new changes of the era. However, their lead should not be downplayed, especially in particular contexts and those that are more exposed to external contact. A similar situation had developed in the same area several centuries earlier in the thirteenth century BC, when Mycenaeans, especially craftsmen, temporarily stayed with indigenous communities at, for instance, Termitito, and individual Aegean contacts already had an impact on local culture, sowing the seeds of technological change in the form of production (Bettelli *et*

al. 2008: 17–35).

Moreover, if we want to see an indigenous community at L'Amastuola that welcomed Greek elements and maintained its organisational 'primacy' and autonomy for a long period, against the nearby *polis* of Taras, we should also admit that a limited Greek presence without political importance was nevertheless hugely influential in social terms and impacted notably on the habits of the local community. The burials, for example, can barely be distinguished from their Tarentine counterparts, as they are all characterised by the exclusive use of Greek ceramics. Even more surprising is the adoption of formal burial, while in the rest of the Salento, tombs remain 'invisible'. The spatial organisation of the burial ground was also unknown to local people, but in Greek cities, the space for the dead is always found in areas that are separate from the town. Among indigenous communities, tombs are found in close proximity to living areas to underline the unity of family groups rather than the community as a whole.

It is hard to imagine a society that not only adopted Greek-style houses but that was so deeply influenced by the Greek newcomers in many cultural aspects, including such usually conservative ones such as burial. This raises the question of why an 'indigenous' type of wall (*agger*) and one or more local oval huts should necessarily be interpreted as evidence of indigenous continuity and primacy, while the appearance of Greek-style houses and burials should be necessarily seen as a form of 'acculturation'. Or can the *agger* and indigenous houses also be interpreted in terms of 'acculturation'? Is it possible to interpret the 'primacy' of indigenous people as part of mutual exchanges of techniques and habits within a community managed by Greeks from their basis at Taras? A similar situation has been proposed for Megara Hyblaea in Sicily, where the oldest wall of the site has been interpreted as built by Greeks drawing on local techniques (Tréziny 2010: 557–65).

These considerations are not prompted by a need to propose alternative avenues more in line with 'traditional' reconstructions, but rather should be seen as a *caveat* to

reconstructions that risk being as rigid as those hitherto accepted. To follow the new reconstructions proposed for L'Amastuola, it seems to me that we assume a strong 'acculturation' model for the indigenous inhabitants in their interactions with Greeks and not vice versa, which is precisely the inequality that the outdated acculturative paradigm set out to demolish. Why not accept that Greeks, too, could undergo 'acculturation', and drop the assumption that a defensive wall, oval huts and matt-painted pottery equal indigenous people? The 'bilingual' documentation could actually be interpreted in terms of a 'creolised' society that had not necessarily maintained its own autonomy from the nearby Greek cities. The nature and intensity of contacts may have varied over time, especially during the first 'colonial' generation, and even if there is no lack of evidence of pacific cohabitation and mutual exchanges of know-how and technologies, it should not be forgotten that societies evolve and transform over time, and that conflict and tyranny are one of the most recurrent phenomena in history (Morris 2003). I do not necessarily wish to re-propose a picture of 'ethnic' war, but I simply reiterate that the available evidence is not sufficient to deny that local power relations were upset as the Tarentine plain was occupied by Greek settlers (Lombardo 2002). If the indigenous settlement became included in Greek territory by the late seventh century BC, when the Greek foundation of Taras was becoming ever more influential, we should not be surprised by mixed cultural manifestations, including the persistence of matt-painted pottery. Indigenous women may have become involved in Greek migration (De Vido 2004), but it is also possible that local elites became equal partners in the management of the Greek community (Hall 2004).

Greek cultural elements had become the only visible ones at L'Amastuola from the late seventh century BC, which contrasts sharply with other indigenous communities further away from Taras, and this development is perhaps more easily explained by political transformation of the community than understood as rapid and pervasive 'acculturation' so as to make indigenous features unrecognisable from the Greek ones by the late seventh

century BC. I think we can therefore exclude that the incorporation into the Taras *chora* took place only in the fifth century BC, an era which was a time of crisis for the *polis*, when we find a depopulation of the territory in favour of the urban centre (Greco 1988). In conclusion, the model of ‘hybrid’ societies does not necessarily lead us to overestimate the role of indigenous people, nor does it take us towards utopist reconstructions of indigenous communities living in the vicinity of expanding colonial settlements (Greco 2005).

The breakdown of the equilibrium can be found, in my opinion, during the second half of the seventh century when, throughout the whole Ionic Gulf, signs may be found of great transformations, such as the end of the Incoronata settlement and the termination of ‘mixed’ settlement experiences, that had developed in the seventh century in the territory where Metapontum was built (De Siena and Giardino 1999). For a better understanding of the case of L’Amastuola, it is necessary to broaden our perspective to include the wider region, in particular that of Incoronata di Pisticci in the foothills above the Ionic coast near the right bank of the Basento (Bianco 1999; Cossalter and De Faveri 2008). From the ninth century BC, this area was home to a community, whose importance and high cultural level are especially notable in the rich cemeteries such as that of San Teodoro (Figure 13.3). In the eighth century BC, mid and late Geometric artefacts signal the first Greek contacts (Orlandini 1974), and around 700 BC, a substantial transformation took place in the organisation of space, as life became concentrated on the northeastern plain, where a substantial settlement had already developed. The most striking change is shown by the construction of rectangular structures of 10–12 sq m with stone foundations and mud-brick walls, which have yielded abundant Greek pottery (Aegean amphorae and Protocorinthian and east Greek pottery, including ‘colonial’ productions with eclectic and figured decoration). There is also evidence for pottery production.

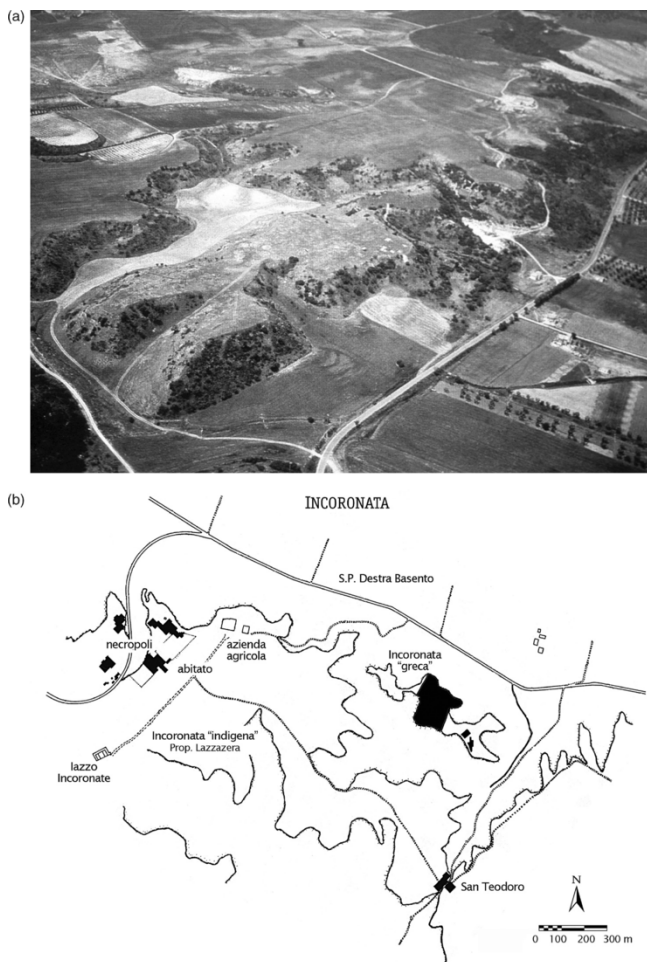


Figure 13.3. Aerial view (a) and overview plan (b) of the sites at Incoronata di Pisticci (from Carter 2006: fig. 2.2).

A heated debate (with different positions: Pelosi 1991; Osanna 1992: 40–42; De Siena and Giardino 1999; Carter 2006: 55–68; Denti 2008; Guzzo 2011: 303–306) has started up between those who think that the plateau remained in the hands of indigenous peoples who entered intensive trade relations with Greeks, and those who see the establishment of a Greek community from the eastern Aegean at Incoronata. The excavations by the University of Milan in the 1970s and 1980s led to a reconstruction, in which a

large indigenous centre was suddenly replaced by a Greek settlement. This view was in accordance with the model frequently applied to 'colonial' situations in those years; it also influenced the early interpretations of L'Amastuola. This 'ethnic substitution' was also detected in the material culture, as matt-painted pottery gave way to Greek productions and imports after the first quarter of the seventh century BC. Only 'midden' ditches with indigenous material have been preserved from this phase, as, according to this reconstruction, the remains of the indigenous settlement were erased by rectangular Greek houses flanked by ditches with mixed Greek and indigenous material. The latter are interpreted as the result of cleaning of the area during the construction of the Greek buildings. The archaeological remains were thus seen to signal a Hellenic oppression of local people in order to establish either a Greek port or *emporion* to provide the local Oenotrian people with locally produced figurative Greek pottery (Orlandini 1982), or a purely Greek settlement that soon evolved into a real *polis* (Stea 1999). The *emporion/polis* would then have been destroyed violently around 630 BC, with the foundation of the Achaean 'colony' or *apoikia* of Metapontum, followed by a process of territorialisation in this area on both banks of the Basento River.

A substantially different picture has been proposed on the basis of evidence mostly assembled by the archaeological service (De Siena and Giardino 1999) and the new excavations at 'Greek Incoronata' (Denti 2008). On the one hand, as at L'Amastuola, the absence of matt-painted pottery in the seventh-century settlement was proved wrong, as demonstrated by the discovery of a kiln and evidence that some of the ditches had been filled with material from these pottery productions. The presumed Greek 'primacy' was thus notably called into question. Moreover, as at nearby 'indigenous Incoronata', a number of *enchytrismos* burials have been attested, depositions in the fetal position in amphorae, which are no doubt indigenous. Based on this revision, therefore, Incoronata could be considered indigenous and seen as being transformed at the start of the seventh century BC, when Greek settlers were welcomed, for

example artisans, which would have led to a ‘creolisation’ process of the community. It is now also clear that the entire Ionic coast between Metapontum and Policoro in the first half of the seventh century housed ‘mixed’ populations: a similar situation has, for example, been found at the site where Metapontum would later be founded (the so-called Andrisani plot). Two large ditches, interpreted as the sunken hut floors, yielded material similar to that of Incoronata (De Siena and Giardino [1999](#)).

This new research documents fluid ‘mixed’ communities along the Ionic coast during most of the seventh century BC, rather than trading posts or Greek settlements founded to dominate indigenous people. These sites may be interpreted as places of contact between different peoples, as at L’Amastuola, and thus make up ‘landscapes of contact’ that emerged as the major Greek settlements of Taras and Sybaris were established.

We are therefore dealing with settlements that developed in areas that were not directly affected by the first ‘colonial’ Greek movement but that were created or transformed in order to benefit from the relationship with other people or because they were conditioned by contact. The two-way process of ‘acculturation’ must have been rapid and deep, and the protagonists of this process might have been the indigenous aristocracy who welcomed (as in the Mycenaean period) Greek craftsmen, who brought new knowledge and techniques and who were in turn attracted by the dynamism of the local people. In areas that were heavily exposed to contact, at least from the first half of the eighth century (Guzzo [2011](#): 35–69), some local groups may have encouraged the settlement of foreigners, whose presence and whose know-how brought prestige, together with techniques and customs.

These areas are all near the coast but yet at some distance from the emergent *poleis* of Taras and Sybaris, and they became ideal places for the development of those forms of mixed ‘ethnicities’ that lead to the emergence of hybrid societies. However, it remains to be understood when and how these communities became part of the territories that in

the Archaic period were in the hands of the Greek *poleis*, as we have to ask where the Greeks came from who settled here. Given the relatively large percentage of east Greek pottery at Incoronata, it has been suggested that, at least at that site, the settlers came from the eastern Aegean, but this view is probably influenced by literary information about a ‘colonial’ presence at Siris, whose precise location is still a matter of debate (Giardino 2010; Osanna and Zuchtriegel 2012: 17–45). It is not only questionable to resort to facile equations between the provenance of material and the identity of the people that used or exchanged them (Morgan 1999), but some objects, especially those produced locally, can also be used as an indication that some people learned their craft in one area rather than another. In this context, the role of Cycladic and Euboean people should not be underestimated, as various contexts along the Ionic Gulf suggest that local productions of the eighth century were strongly influenced by Euboean and Cycladean pottery (Jacobsen and Handberg 2010; Mercuri 2004). At Incoronata, for example, most pottery was locally produced but denotes an eclectic imagination that can be traced to both Aegean islands and Peloponnesian experiences (Denti 2002). Although some might argue that this constitutes proof of a varied provenance of Greek people, it has also been argued that we see artisans at work in an ‘international’ culture, who vividly interpret the different traditions of Greece itself: in short, a hybrid ‘colonial’ scene, whose liveliness is stimulated by these ‘peripheral’ experiences and that are not channelled into rigid forms of self-identity. Within this interestingly varied situation, if it is read through the perspective of future developments of Greek and indigenous relationships, is the presence of a Spartan craft tradition which until now has mostly been underestimated (Coudin 2010). This presence is evident not only in ‘functional’ objects of Spartan provenance such as amphorae, but especially in the production of extraordinary items such as the monumental figurative basin (*perirrhanterion*) discovered in *oikos* (house) H (Figures 13.4a–b). It has been dated to the third quarter of the seventh century (Orlandini 1980), but one of the relief

friezes, a lively battle scene, is best compared to a figured scene on a Spartan krater that is dated to the start of the sixth century BC but that could possibly also date to the last decades of the seventh century BC. It is in any case clearly a Spartan product, despite the evident Corinthian influx (Christou 1964: 260–61). The interesting point is that the Incoronata site has yielded a mould of this figured scene that had apparently been locally produced. From the point of view of craft exchange in Magna Graecia, it seems to me that these reliefs demonstrate not so much mobility of just these matrixes as that of the craftsmen who produced such elaborate artefacts. It is not unlikely, as the later evidence from Torre di Satriano suggests (cf. below), that Tarentine artisans in search of fortune ventured beyond the *polis* and its territory to participate in and contribute to a vibrant environment of production and exchange. In this view, the initial contacts of the early eighth century BC, in which Euboeans played a major role, subsequently gave way to a ‘colonial diaspora’ of small groups of Greeks from the by then established towns of Taras and Sybaris, whereby they moved temporarily to nearby indigenous centres such as Incoronata and L’Amastuola.

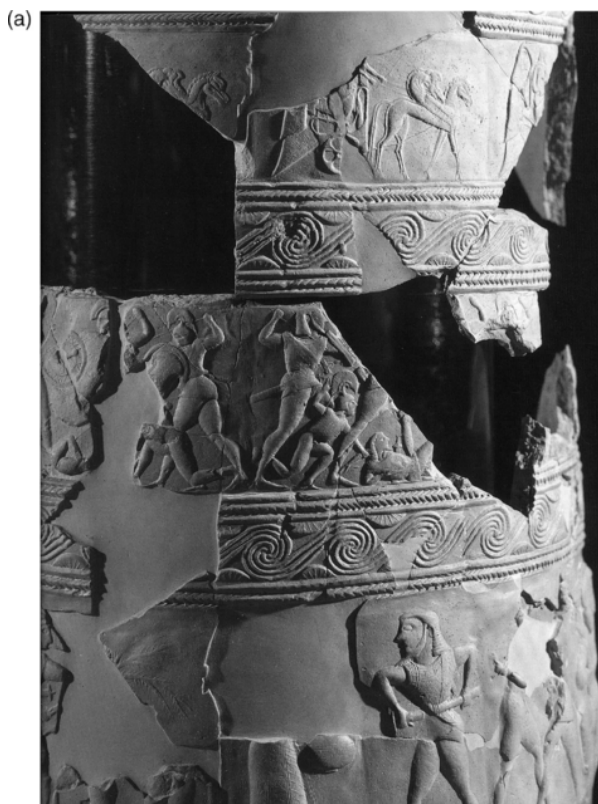


Figure 13.4. Figured basin with relief friezes from oikos H at Incoronata di Pisticci (a: Foto Soprintendenza per i Beni

Archeologici della Basilicata) and Spartan krater with relief friezes (b: from Dawkins 1929: pl. 16).

The types of contact can therefore be various and need to be evaluated case by case, from the events at L'Amastuola, where in the late eighth century in a uninhabited area an indigenous community was started which soon became 'mixed', to that of Incoronata where a flourishing community in the Iron Age underwent radical changes, both from the topographical and customs and production points of view. The seventh century BC was a period of adjustment for the various 'colonial' groups of the Ionic coast that gave life to the interweaving relationships at different levels – very fruitful decades, signalled by the dynamic settlement complexes that developed lively craft productions (Etienne 2010). These phenomena triggered a variety of coexistence solutions, likely to have been structured by the indigenous peoples, who, however, in the arc of a few decades, were destined to disappear or give life to new realities. It isn't an accident that the extraordinary experiences of the Incoronata ended by the end of the seventh century BC, whilst L'Amastuola saw its indigenous communities become ever less perceptible. It is interesting to note that the transformations that were underway did not really involve *poleis*, where – parallel to the structuring of the two *apoikia* of Sybaris and Taras – 'mixed' communities were placed. Whilst Incoronata (and the settlements developing in the same site of Metapontum and its immediate surroundings) succumbed coincidentally with the foundation of Metapontum (traditionally fixed on the basis of archaeological data to 630 BC) that, to judge from the sources, would have been precisely intended by the Sybarites, L'Amastuola progressively transformed in a Greek way, probably incorporated in the same era into the Taras *chora*.

To understand the range of the changes that engaged the indigenous communities at the beginning of Iron Age II, the case of the Sybaritide is particularly emblematic. The dynamics of this relationship, especially with local people,

has recently opened a lively debate (Maaskant-Kleibrink 2003; 2006; Attema 2008; Quondam 2008; Vanzetti 2008; summary in Guzzo 2011: 219–26). Between the Bronze Age and the early Iron Age, settlements had been established on the hills surrounding the fertile coastal plain, such as at Torre Mordillo, Francavilla Marittima and Trebisacce to name the ones best known. These were complex and well-organised communities, culturally homogenous and extremely dynamic, characterised by competition and technologically advanced forms and modes of production (Peroni and Trucco 1994). Despite this complexity, many of these communities abandoned their settlements by the end of the eighth century BC (Vanzetti 2008). Because these evidently negative developments coincided with what archaeology and classical sources tell us about the arrival of Hellenic people, the obvious question is what caused the abandonment? The generally accepted version of events blamed the colonial presence in, and its territorial occupation of, the Sybaris area at the expense of the indigenous population, who were overwhelmed and marginalised by the protagonists of a new process of territorialisation (Greco 1992; Osanna 1999). Consequently, even evidence of ritual innovation in various indigenous sites in the centre of the plain have been taken as the result of the Greek conquest (Osanna 1992).

A new reading has recently been proposed by the Dutch team at L'Amastuola, who have previously conducted research on the Timpone della Motta in the Sybaris area, where the acropolis, already home to a large community before the arrival of the Greeks, housed some form of divine cult as early as Iron Age I (Figure 13.5). In building V, a large apsidal structure, the presence of a fireplace with substantial ash remains, where personal bronze ornaments have been found, has been presented as evidence of a sacrificial area to a goddess 'of the loom' – as large loomweights with so-called 'labyrinthine decorations' were found in the structure (Maaskant-Kleibrink 2003; Kleibrink 2006; Attema 2008). The transformation of the building at the end of the eighth century has been interpreted as the consequence of the arrival of the Greeks at Sybaris.

Alongside the erection of new structures on the plateau, interpreted as temples, a rectangular structure was built on top of the ‘apsidal house’, of which only the postholes remain in the bedrock, but which shows an internal layout reminiscent of a Greek temple. In the excavators’ view, Greeks would have united with local people to celebrate together an already existing religious cult. To explain the striking similarities between the indigenous cult and Greek rituals, beginning with a goddess – identified as Athena in an Archaic inscription – whom is offered a *peplos* (dress), we have to look back to the presence of Greek artisans in a proto-colonial period. These include in the first place Euboeans, who began to produce so-called ‘Entrio-Euboean’ wares during the eighth century BC (Jacobsen and Handberg 2010). Nevertheless, this does not explain why the peaceful co-existence and joint worship of Greeks and local people at Francavilla was counterbalanced by the disappearance of significant indigenous settlements in the whole area. If the sudden disappearance of flourishing protohistorical communities cannot be explained as a consequence of Greek occupation of the fertile plain crossed by the rivers Crati and Coscile, other options need to be considered.

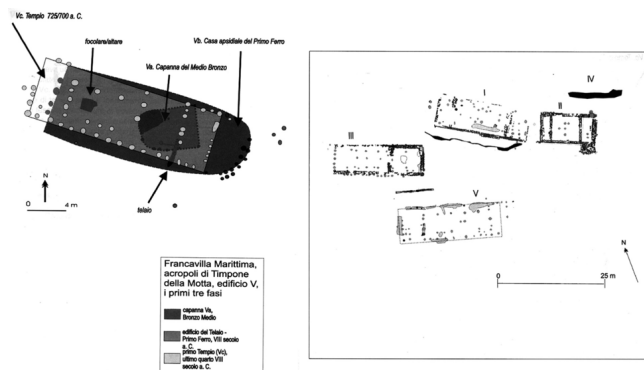


Figure 13.5. Overview plan of the site at Timpono della Motta, Francavilla Marittima (right), which includes a large apsidal structure (building V: left) (from Maaskant-Kleibrink 2003: figs 16–17).

The settlements on the surrounding hills were either abandoned, such as Trebisacce and Torre Mordillo, possibly

the dominant site of the district, or radically transformed, as in the case of Francavilla Marittima. The later chronologies of Trebisacce unequivocally show how a large and complex settlement was deserted by the end of the eighth century (Vanzetti 2008). Similarly, at Francavilla, the Macchiabate necropolis that yielded rich eighth-century burials showed signs of notable changes from the start of the seventh century BC, when burials were all female and new grave goods and funerary rites appeared (Osanna 1992; Quondam 2008). On the highest terrace, where the early Iron Age structures such as building V once stood, unmistakable signs of a Greek-style sacred space appeared, such as ex-votos, ritual instruments and Greek building plans. The many clay objects of the sanctuary are dominated by Greek material. Even if the indigenous matt-painted ware did not disappear (Kleibrink and Barresi 2009), it was rare enough to question whether the area remained in indigenous hands; the uncertain chronology of the so-called 'undulating-band' type and its continuity or not into the seventh century further complicate the issue.

At the same time, it still needs to be demonstrated how the temple structures of building V were actually used. The so-called ritual evidence does not necessarily mean that the building was a sanctuary, as it seems to me that by dismantling Greek primacy, we fall into the error of giving a Greek interpretation to the ritual traces (temple, goddess of the loom, ex-voto). As the recent discoveries at Torre di Satriano demonstrate, the similarly organised and sized apsidal structure was destined, in the indigenous environment of the hinterland, to host the chief and the privileged ceremonies of a figure at the head of the community (Osanna *et al.* 2009). Here, the conspicuous traces of ritualised sociality are not interpreted as evidence of a sanctuary, but rather they are seen as part of the collective demonstrations of a group in power that mark in their own home the ceremonial events of the community. After all, as anthropological research has long pointed out, ritual is a very broad category, and covers a series of expressions and collective practices with often uncertain boundaries (Scarduelli 2007: 7–65): theoretical approaches

must be chosen cautiously to avoid going down problematic or simply wrong heuristic paths. Many aspects of indigenous rituals escape archaeological investigation, from symbolic meanings connected to cosmology and myth, to sacred landscapes and architecture, as well as the meaning of objects that give insight into ritual actions. While it is therefore difficult to track ritual in indigenous contexts, in the Greek world, it is clear that from at least the eighth century BC, the sanctuary became a key feature of its communities. The Greek situation does not provide parameters that necessarily apply to indigenous contexts, however, and it cannot be assumed that the latter may be interpreted in similar ways (Osanna [2011](#)).

The transformation towards Greek standards, as evident at the Timpone della Motta, where the repetitiveness of hundreds of *hydriai* and *pyxis* lids in votive deposits alludes to a communal participation in rituals, seems to me a phenomenon to be understood within the context of territorialisation of the Sybaris region. Only in this way can I explain the substantial continuity throughout the seventh century BC seen in the sacred sphere, which is at odds with the funerary evidence, where the disintegration of the community is indisputable.

To conclude, I want to emphasise that a Greek presence along the Ionian Sea in the eighth century is evident in specific contexts situated between the coast and the immediate hinterland. It seems likely that this distribution was shaped by the dynamic nature of local communities who were already actively transforming the landscape when the Greeks inserted themselves into the dynamics of local power relations. Within this situation, the different ‘ethnic’ components, the different communities, and indeed segments of communities may have responded in a variety of ways to the ‘external’ interference. While some communities entered into ‘peaceful’ and constructive contact with the Greeks (as with other indigenous peoples), there undoubtedly must have been cases in this climate of competition and general development in which the Greek communities came to conquer and occupy, especially in the

areas where the relationships between different peoples was more fluid and perhaps less ethnically determined. In terms of historical reconstruction, it does not seem possible to argue, with Yntema (2000), that the scarcity of unequivocally Greek material evidence between Taras and Sybaris calls for a reconsideration of the entire political and social developments of the communities living along the Ionic coast (Greco 2005). Whatever way one looks at this, cases such as L'Amastuola and Francavilla Marittima show that the Greek element did in any case become more visible in the seventh century BC.

Recognising the indigenous contribution to the formation of 'colonial' communities and taking into account the many variables involved in cultural contacts, there seems to be little ground to jump to the diametrically opposed conclusion that the Greek presence along the Ionian coast between the eighth and seventh centuries should not be considered in terms of a *polis* (Yntema 2000).

City Living? Settlement Types and Power in the Lucanian Apennines of the Second Iron Age (Eighth–Sixth Centuries BC)

Shifting our attention to the mountainous inland regions of the Apennine hinterlands, we encounter new significant data on the settlement types and the development of the indigenous communities between Iron Age I and II (Figure 13.6). A key site that has yielded extraordinary evidence is Torre di Satriano, where extensive fieldwork by the University of Basilicata has documented development of the settlement over time (Osanna *et al.* 2009: 301–30). The site was founded around the mid-eighth century BC and appears to match a pattern noted throughout the northwest Basilicata Apennines (Baragiano, Serra di Vaglio, etc.), where well-defended highlands served by springs and situated near rivers that ensured connectivity through the impenetrable highlands were reoccupied after a long period

of abandonment. Judging from the material culture and the funerary rituals that may be related to the lower Bradano valley and the Matera area (Bottini 1999a), mobility appears to have characterised southern Italian communities in the eighth century. The districts between the Ionic coast and the middle Bradano river with thriving sites such as Matera, Timmari, Gravina and Incoronata appear to have given rise to what we may term a process of ‘internal colonisation’ (Bettelli *et al.* 2008).

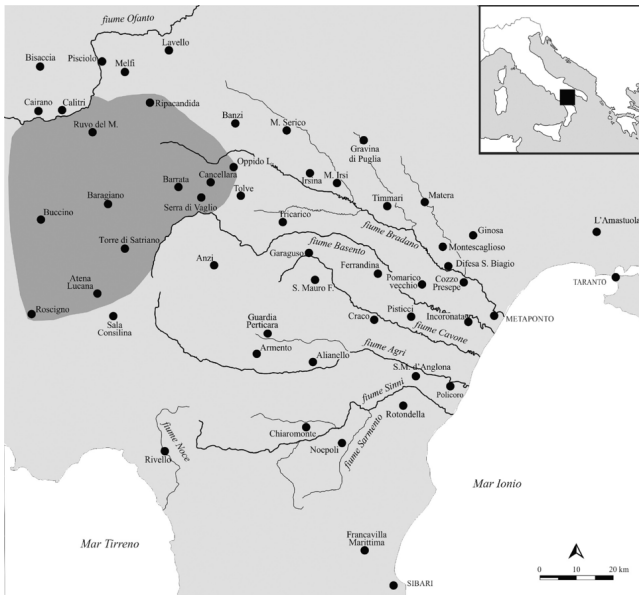


Figure 13.6. Map of the inland regions of the southern Apennine mountains, outlining in particular the northern Lucanian area (highlighted).

The ‘foundation’ of the settlement at Torre di Satriano is documented by various habitation areas from the eighth century BC that were spread out on higher ground up to 1000 m a.s.l. on small plateaux and terraces and usually connected to springs and water courses. The overall settlement was organised in a number of separate settlement cores that comprise both houses and burials, and did not become ‘properly’ urban until the end of the fifth century BC. These areas also comprised productive facilities and spaces for raising animals and growing crops (Figure 13.7).

The close juxtaposition of burials and domestic spaces and the invisibility of cultic or public spaces underline the non-urban nature of the settlement as a whole: there was evidently little need to cement the unity of the community through the use of a divine figure and representational spaces of collective identity (Osanna 2011). Kinship groups presumably remained the basic units of the community instead, and the places of memory and belonging were found in the funerary sphere, where group descent is emphasised as opposed to the shared ancestry of the group as a whole. Consumption and ritualised sociality remained anchored in the domestic and associated funerary spaces of the elites.

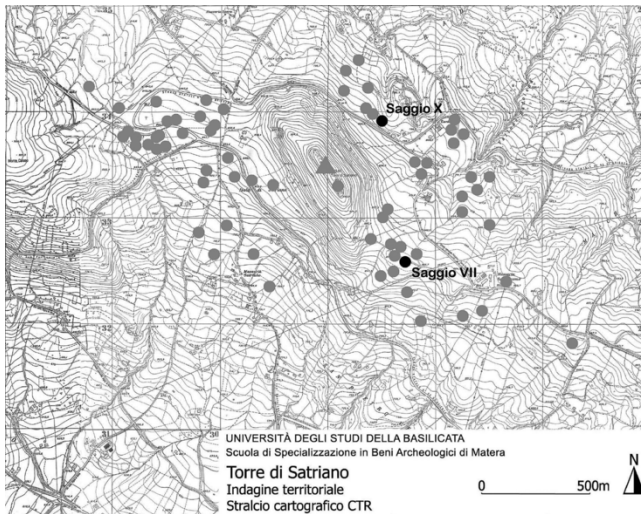


Figure 13.7. Torre di Satriano: settlement in Iron Age II (eighth to sixth centuries BC).

In the two extensively excavated areas, about 1 km distant from each other (Figure 13.7), two monumental buildings built with different techniques and of different chronologies have been brought to light. The eastern one is an apsidal residence, built using a dry-stone technique in the seventh century BC on an earlier eighth-century structure. It was destroyed by fire shortly before the mid-sixth century BC (Figure 13.8). On the northern plateau, a sumptuous ‘palace’ is currently being excavated which was built around 560/550 BC, which is around the same years that the

apsidal residence was destroyed. The model for the monumental roof of this building is clearly contemporary Greek temple architecture (Figure 13.9).

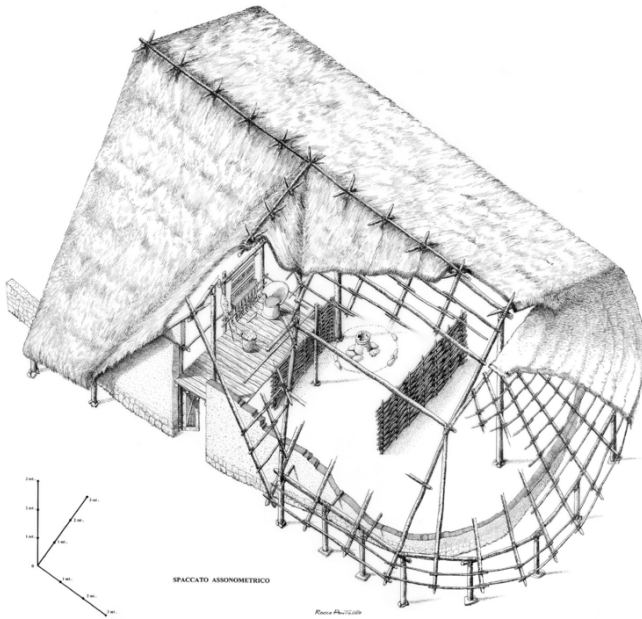


Figure 13.8. Torre di Satriano: reconstruction of the apsidal building (by R. Pontolillo).

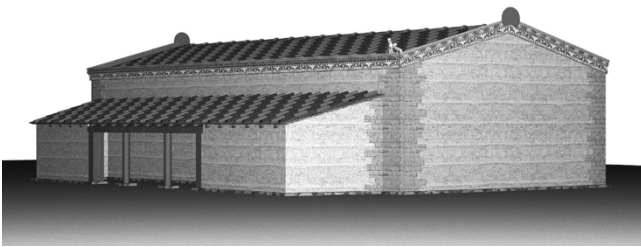


Figure 13.9. Torre di Satriano: digital reconstruction of the so-called *anaktoron* (by D. Bruscella).

These buildings were designed as seats for the powerful families of the community. We presumably see two distinct groups who were based in two separate areas of the site and who, over time, replaced each other in power. They expressed their prestige and fulfilled their social role

through these residences that stand apart from contemporary domestic architecture, which usually consists of simple small huts (Liseno 2007). In the case of the second building, the construction of a monumental roof with 'exotic' architectural decorations, which evidently required external Greek involvement, accentuates the difference between those in power and the rest of the population. Rather than dealing with a 'Hellenised' community, I therefore argue that this is a case of 'elite Hellenisation', while most of the population had little or no connection with Greek culture. Both the non-indigenous architecture and imported artefacts provide evidence of new codes of behaviour and ideology of the groups in power. That the indigenous elites turned to and took up Greek prestige goods from hoplite arms to symposium and its paraphernalia should, in my view, not so much be regarded as superficial cultural assimilation but rather as the appropriation of symbols to legitimise power and authority, as they were both exotic and difficult to obtain (Hall 2004: 45).

The decorations of the two buildings at Torre di Satriano and the large quantities of feasting artefacts found, which include an elaborate local series of matt-painted ware as well as numerous luxury imports, indicate processes of ritualised socialisation that affected the habits of high-ranking people, the ancient ceremonies of whom were probably notably transformed over time, albeit more in choreography (from indigenous to 'exotic') than in substance.

Because of its large size (22×12.5 m), dominant location and especially impressive amounts of finds, the apsidal building has been identified as an extraordinary residence that housed the head of the entire community. This was a building with various functions, which ranged from everyday family practices to collective politico-religious activities. It is remarkable that ceramic finds include not only coarse *impasto* and non-decorated fine *depurato* wares but also a wide range of matt-painted items, including ceremonial pottery associated with feasting. The *kantharos*, a high-handled bowl of Greek origin that is usually associated

with wine drinking, stands out in particular, since in combination with grape seeds and fruits and chemical analyses it provides evidence for the consumption of wine in this building.

The matt-painted pottery of the northern Lucania (the so-called Ruvo-Satriano class: Yntema 1990: 186–96), which is typical of the mountainous inland region between Ofanto and the vallo di Diano, represents the mid-seventh century BC, when local workshops began to produce a strictly local repertoire that has been associated with increasingly prominent local identities (Figure 13.10; Herring 1998; Carollo and Osanna 2008). The many banqueting sets with both pouring and drinking vessels point to the ritualised activities with a wide participation that transcended family groups (David *et al.* 1988).

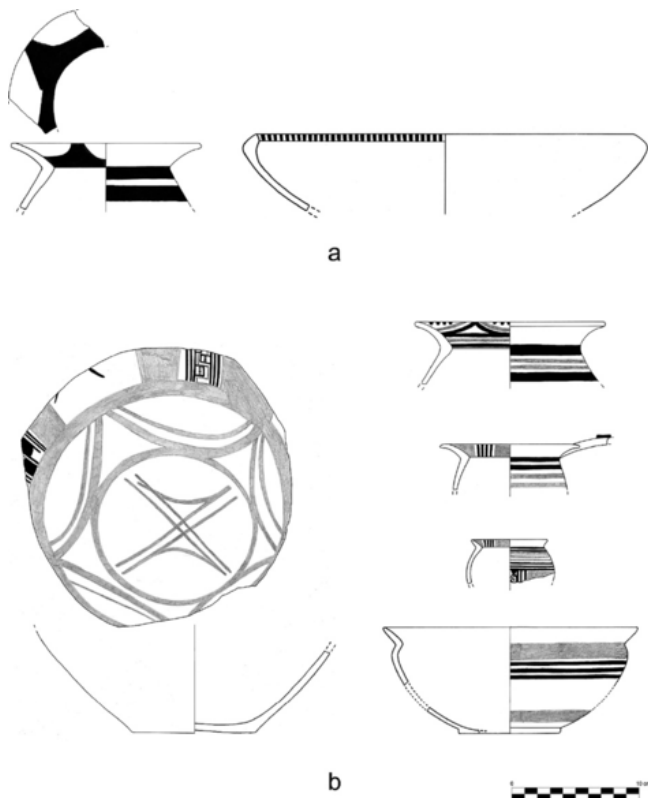


Figure 13.10. Torre di Satriano: matt-painted pottery from the apsidal building (drawings by A. Bruscella).

These social practices, focusing on lavish banquets and the consumption of alcoholic beverages, can be placed alongside social ceremonies, which, as in Dark Age Greece, for instance, were fuelled by strong competition to legitimise and consolidate power (Morris 1997). As is clear from seventh- and sixth-century BC burials, indigenous society in northern Lucania and Puglia was structured in complex ways, with people of rank expressing their status through the acquisition of Greek ‘hoplite’ armaments associated with the use of horses, as well as through rituals that involved the consumption of alcohol (Bottini 1986; 1999b; Torelli 1996). These groups played a role in the later ‘Hellenising’ revolution, which led to the adoption of Greek-style buildings and furnishings, as we see in the slightly later *anaktoron*. This social group also provided the main context for the spread of the matt-painted pottery that became fundamental for the definition of their own identity, culture and ‘ethnic group’. The feast thus became the occasion in which social roles were spelled out, and the right place to host this event could only be the chief’s home. As reconstructed by Mazarakis Ainian (1997) for Dark Age Greece, the chiefs also monopolised ritual sacrifices by restricting them to their own houses, and created a privileged minority.

The later place of power at Torre di Satriano, the so-called *anaktoron*, stands out by its size and decoration. Among the new architectural features, a key change is the shift from an apsidal to a rectangular plan, which emphasises the long side with the monumental entrance. The main part of the building (240 sq m in phase 1) was accessible from a *pastas* or antechamber room in the west. Internally, it was divided into three parts, with ceremonial rooms in the middle, a kitchen/store room to the north and an anteroom to display valuable objects to the south (Figure 13.11). Compared to the older residence, the new building stood out because of its Greek structure and luxury furnishings. However, the real revolution is in the extraordinary roof, which is so heavy that it would have required outside engineering assistance. The metrological and formal aspects of the architecture and

layout refer to the Peloponnese, and the origin of the craftsmen was undoubtedly Tarentine. This is confirmed by the inscriptions in Laconian dialect on the *sima* (decorated roof edge) that are labelled with numbers to guide their installation (Figure 13.12). The *sima* decoration itself and the style of the other architectural sculptures, the sphinx acroterion (rooftop statue) in particular, moreover confirm the Spartan character of the building (Figure 13.13; Osanna *et al.* 2009: 157–75). This is important, as it highlights the close ties between Taras and Sparta in the sixth century BC and further undermines any claims of a ‘weak colonisation’. The presence of Greek artisans as early as 560 BC at Torre di Satriano, writing in Spartan dialect and producing Tarentine-style architectural decorations with strong Spartan connotations, testifies to a strong ‘ethnic’ awareness of these people working in a distant indigenous hinterland. Moreover, this is some 50 years before other Spartan or more likely Tarentine craftsmen were active at Incoronata.



Figure 13.11. Torre di Satriano: vertical aerial view of the so-called *anaktoron* and surrounding area.

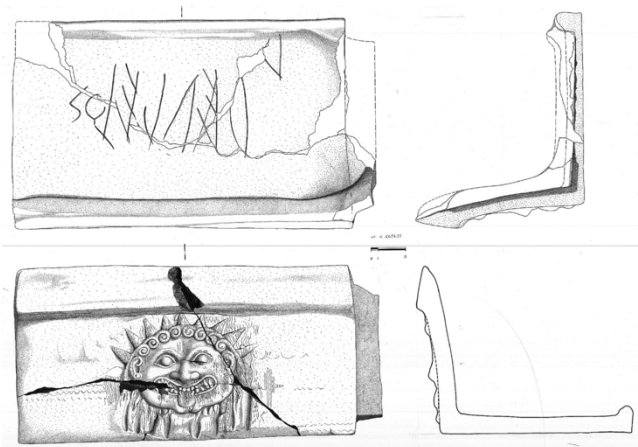


Figure 13.12. Torre di Satriano: fragments of the raking *sima* or gutter with inscription from the so-called *anaktoron* (drawings by R. Pontolillo).



Figure 13.13. Torre di Satriano: fragments from the terracotta frieze from the so-called *anaktoron*.

The ‘Hellenicity’ of the palace (Hall [2002](#)) is also evident in the layout and furnishing of the interior of the building, especially in the central hall with fireplace and the adjacent southern room (room 2), which was used for ceremonies and displaying *keimelia* (precious objects). From the monumental entrance, which was marked by two pillars that opened into the *pastas* room with three vertical looms, one would immediately find oneself in room 2, which served primarily as a transitional space towards the ceremonial room (1a), but that also was used to display precious objects – including

Greek and Etruscan bronzes and imported pottery from Greece and Greek south Italy. The room was entered by opening a double and richly decorated pinewood door, of which the charred remains and bronze appliques have been preserved (a door handle and decorations of a lion and a winged griffin). The emphasis on the doors and roof of the palace recalls the description of Homeric palaces with their richly decorated roofs and doors, which adds symbolic value to the palace complex.

Concluding Comments

The importance of the *anaktoron* at Torre di Satriano for understanding the timing and nature of interaction between Greeks in the coastlands and the inland Italic cultures of south Italy may be obvious, especially if we add the building at Braida di Vaglio, which has recently been reinterpreted in similar terms (Capozzoli and Osanna [2009](#); Greco [2011](#)). These sites demonstrate that local *aristoi* engaged Greek craftsmen for their specialist skills and to acquire exotic products such as Greek and especially Attic pottery as well as precious bronzes. Given the nature of the skills and products involved, these contacts would seem to owe more to local initiative than to itinerant Greek craftsmen. The nature of the contacts suggests that these were long-term relationships with Tarentine aristocracies that were forged by indigenous ‘chiefs’, who rose to power in the second quarter of the sixth century, presumably at the expense of the inhabitants of the older apsidal residence.

Very interesting additional information comes from scientific analysis of pottery that shows the variable nature of relationships with the Greek world, probably because contacts differed from group to group, even within the same settlement. Colonial pottery such as the *coppe a filetti* and other so-called Ionian bowls used in the apsidal residence in fact came from the Metapontum area, whilst those found in the *anaktoron* have different origins. It is likely that they had been acquired from Taras, along with much of the palace furnishings. It is interesting to note that the relationship

with this Spartan settlement continued into the following generation, when, by the end of the sixth century BC, the palace was significantly enlarged. The main part of the building was covered by a gabled roof, and the western *pastas* remained in use but a courtyard and various rooms were added to the north and east of the complex, the latter covered by a roof with lion eaves and a *simā* with alternating gorgon masks, and crowned by a palmette *anthemion* of a type frequently used to decorate portable objects in Taras (Osanna and Capozzoli 2012).

In terms of the ‘international culture’ of these leaders, it is interesting to compare the image of the ‘prince’ of the *anaktoron* with his counterpart of the apsidal residence. The cultural biography of the ‘chief’ that emerges from both residences is substantially similar and may be summarised as that of a generous host who organised and sponsored social gatherings and specific rituals accompanied by lavish feasts. The difference is in the ‘superstructure’, or rather the paraphernalia used, and in the symbolism of power and how rituals were staged. In the apsidal residence, almost all items used for feasting were of local origin, with only a very small percentage of pottery imported from the colonial world (*filetti* and Ionic cups) and from nearby cultural groups (e.g. the ‘indigenous’ *kantharos*). Inside the *anaktoron*, on the other hand, almost all objects were Etruscan (bronze basins) and especially Greek (bronzes and ceramics): an Attic Black Figure symposium set stands out in particular, as it comprised kraters, amphorae, a hydria and two large *kylikes*, as well as a lavish set of wine cups (at least 10 Little Masters *kylikes*, two Siana cups and a so-called ‘Droop-type’ cup). This banquet service is close to that found in the ‘princely’ grave of nearby Baragiano, and these two sites thus suggest that by the second half of the sixth century, conviviality was more or less uniformly expressed in the south Italian hinterland of the Apennine mountains, drawing on the exotic appearance and provenance of figured versus geometric pottery to legitimise leadership (Osanna and Capozzoli 2012: 287–94). The similarity between the *anaktoron* at Torre di Satriano and the Baragiano tomb shows that similar ceremonies were performed by and for

people of similar rank and function. These created special occasions of communal sociality for the *aristoi*, which came to be repeated even on the occasion of the death of the *Gastgeber*. It is certainly no coincidence that at Baragiano, as at Vaglio, ‘princely’ tombs are invariably situated close to the palaces with heavy roofs and similar decorations. Foreign elements nevertheless remained somewhat superficial phenomena, since all of this occurred within a community that continued to refuse to organise itself according to urban norms and that preferred to ‘coexist’ with the dead.

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Hybridisation and Cultural Encounters

If travel and migration have long been facts of Mediterranean life in both the distant and recent past, then cultural encounters must have been a familiar and recurrent experience among many communities. While culture contact and cultural change are long-standing major themes in archaeology across the globe, in the Mediterranean they have featured particularly prominently in the Bronze and especially Iron Ages. The reason is the continuously increasing connectivity across the Mediterranean during these periods, which is evident in wider distributions and higher frequencies of objects throughout the Bronze Age and the establishment of permanent 'colonial' settlements in the Iron Age.

Mediterranean archaeologists and historians have made prominent contributions to these discussions. Indeed, some of the earliest and most innovative ventures into new conceptual territory have been pioneered in Iron Age and Classical archaeology, even if these early attempts invariably remained without any follow-up. Gruzinski and Rouveret (1976) and Veyne (1979) in particular realised the richness of the Mediterranean evidence and explicitly drew extensive comparisons with colonial situations elsewhere in world history to gain a better understanding, respectively, of Iron Age and Roman cultural encounters. Their essays, however, groundbreaking as they were, never gained much following. Bénabou (1976) similarly made an explicit connection between Algerian independence and the intellectual

decolonisation of Maghreb history, and recognised the consequences for the archaeology of the region early on, but it was not until the late 1990s that his views were taken seriously (Mattingly 1996).

Only during the last two decades has thinking about Greek and Phoenician ‘colonies’ of the Iron Age Mediterranean shifted significantly. In the wake of the broader ‘post-colonial turn’ in the humanities and social sciences, archaeological approaches to and interpretations of the associated cultural encounters, colonial or otherwise, have thus been revisited and continue to be re-examined. Recognising the traditional one-sided focus on the – typically Greek or Phoenician – colonisers’ expansion and achievements, the roles played by local and indigenous inhabitants of the colonised regions are being reassessed and their connections with the colonisers’ impact scrutinized. As a result, conventional black and white representations of colonial situations that not only pitched colonisers against colonised but also kept the two sides carefully apart are now giving way to more nuanced views that appreciate the dynamics and contradictions of cultural interaction and engagement. The colonial divide between colonisers and colonised that has long been taken for granted as a fundamental and defining feature of colonial situations is rapidly being dismantled in favour of representations that recognise their variability and complexity, as well as the range and numbers of groups and communities involved, if not caught up, in colonial situations (van Dommelen 1997; 2011; González-Ruibal 2010; Lydon and Rizvi 2010).

Concepts such as acculturation and centre-periphery that previously framed debates of cultural encounters have been unpacked and cast aside. In turn, alternative notions such as hybridity, cultural entanglement and the ‘Middle Ground’ have become focal points of research, and questions about the complexity of colonial society have been raised and examined from diverse angles (Lightfoot 1995; Cusick 1998; Gosden 2004; Palmié 2006; Dietler 2010: 27–53). The twin notions of hybridity and hybridisation, which are sometimes glossed as creolisation, *mestizaje* or *métissage*, are gradually

emerging as the most prominent terms to capture the complexity and ‘mixed’ nature of objects, traditions and practices that develop in colonial situations (Burke 2009). Such notions emphasise the situated nature of social and cultural interaction in colonial and other contexts of cultural interaction, and call into question static conceptions of neatly bounded and ‘pure’ cultures and identities (Friedman 1990; Webster 2001; van Dommelen 2002).

Despite the current interest in hybridity, the notion is not entirely without its problems. For one thing, it derives from a natural science background and has a history of colonialist discourse and racial overtones (Burke 2009: 1–12). It has also been argued that the notion presupposes ‘pure’ ancestral forms logically to precede the mixed races, cultures and traditions that constitute the hybrid outcomes of interaction (Dietler 2010: 51–52; Stockhammer 2012a; 2013). While this may be necessary to postulate ‘pure antecedents’, when it comes to recognising or indeed classifying material culture or traditions in an attempt to trace genealogies if not networks across time and space (Stockhammer 2012b; Antonaccio 2013), a somewhat ‘looser’, logically less strict and perhaps ‘slippery’ but certainly more resourceful understanding of hybridity has, by contrast, made it possible to delve into the practical aspects of colonial and contact situations on the ground and to explore them comparatively. Detailed analysis of what have been termed the ‘political dimensions of hybridity’ has gone some way to foreground people’s actions and responses within specific colonial situations (VanValkenburgh 2013: 306–309; e.g. van Dommelen 2002; Jiménez 2011; Liebmann 2012; Loren 2013).

On a more fundamental level, it has also been countered that the cultural adaptation of hybridity as a concept is based on the dissolution of cultures as bounded and ‘pure’ entities. Since the post-colonial reworking of hybridity is thus predicated on moving beyond an essentialist understanding of culture, tradition and practice, epistemological concerns about implied conceptual purity miss the point of practical engagement of people on the

ground in colonial and other contact situations (Burke 2009; Jiménez 2011).

Concerns about these critiques have nevertheless led to proposals to discard the notion of hybridity altogether and to replace it with other terms. One of these is ‘entanglement’, which is rather more neutral, even if it does little more in conceptual terms than highlighting the complexities and interconnections created in situations of intensive cultural interaction such as colonialism (Dietler 2010: 52–53). As this term has also been taken up to discuss the relationships between people and material culture (Hodder 2012; and see introduction to chapters 18–24, this volume), the conceptual waters are beginning to be blurred as well (Stockhammer 2012b; 2013).

Yet another term that has attracted some following is that of the ‘Middle Ground’. It was first proposed by the historian Richard White (1991), who used it to refer to the Great Lakes region of the North American Upper Mid-West between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. He characterised the situation as one where individuals and entire communities actively and intensively engaged with each other through processes of ‘creative, and often expedient, misunderstandings ... from which arise new meanings and through them new practices’ (White 1991: x; Malkin 2002). In the Mediterranean context, this concept has been taken up to explore contact situations in Iron Age central and southern Italy as well as Sicily (Malkin 1998; 2011: 143–69; Antonaccio 2013). Like Pratt’s (1991; 1992) ‘contact zone’, it is the spatial nature of these metaphors that is naturally attractive to archaeologists, as is best demonstrated by Gosden’s (2004: 82–113) elaboration of these terms.

In the end, it is not so much the specific term used that counts but the ways in which innovative and nuanced ideas and perspectives such as hybridity, entanglement, appropriation, ‘middle ground’ and ‘third space’ are brought to bear on the specific contexts and practices of interaction (van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012). The chapters in this section thus complement those on connectivity and mobility

by highlighting the more specific theme of cultural encounters and underscoring the recent interest in and rapidly accruing research on this topic. The notable differences between these chapters show once more the extent to which hybridisation and culture contact remain as hotly debated as they are critical for understanding the Bronze and Iron Ages across the Mediterranean. Above all, they demonstrate the relevance of these debates for the Mediterranean as a whole and offer first-hand evidence of cutting-edge research in the Mediterranean.

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14 Migration, Hybridization, and Resistance: Identity Dynamics in the Early Iron Age Southern Levant

Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman

Abstract

The early Iron Age (twelfth–eleventh centuries BC) in the southern Levant (Israel/Palestine) saw the disintegration of Egyptian imperial control and of the Canaanite city-state system that had characterized the region in the Late Bronze Age. New social and cultural groups – Philistines and Israelites – appeared on the historical stage. Recent archaeological research has added much new data about both groups, yet has also questioned (rightly or wrongly) traditional paradigms concerning their emergence in the land. When critically examined, it becomes clear that Philistine and Israelite identities are dialectically related. A variety of processes visible in the archaeological record – migration, interaction, border encounters, and separation – led to ethnic negotiation and demarcation. Moreover the Canaanite population, the substratum upon which the new group identities were built, played a neglected yet highly important role in the processes of ethnogenesis that took place in the region during the early Iron Age.

Introduction

The twelfth and eleventh centuries BC in the eastern Mediterranean mark the dramatic transition from the Late

Bronze Age to the early Iron Age. While the earlier period was characterized by an interconnected network of states, city-states, and powerful palatial societies, the beginning of the Iron Age saw its violent disintegration and transformation into a mosaic of regional cultural and ethnic entities. These entities, however, formed the foundations of new local powers such as the Neo-Hittite kingdoms, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, Amon, Moab and Edom, the Philistine Pentapolis, the Cypriot city-kingdoms, and more (for the great variety of problems and scholarly opinions concerning related issues, see, e.g., Ward and Joukowski 1992; Drews 1993; Gitin *et al.* 1998; Oren 2000; Killebrew and Lehmann 2013, all with previous literature).

In the southern Levant (ancient Canaan), the early Iron Age witnessed the end of Egyptian imperial control and the breakdown of the Canaanite city-state system that characterized the region in the Late Bronze Age. New social and cultural groups – Philistines and Israelites – appeared on the historical stage. Since both groups are known from the Bible, their emergence in Canaan has long been the focus of research by ‘biblical archaeology’ (Killebrew 2005 with bibliography). This branch of archaeology, unique to Palestine, was conceived by its practitioners as the handmaiden of the biblical texts (and for that matter, of other ancient Near Eastern written sources), authenticating and illustrating them (Moorey 1991; Davis 2004). Under such a research paradigm, coupled with a normative cultural-historical approach, the appearance of new material culture assemblages associated with the Philistines and Israelites could have been interpreted only as the result of migratory movements (for classic early statements, see Macalister 1914; Alt 1925; Albright 1949: 112–20).

During the 1970s and 1980s, the archaeology of the southern Levant began to break free from the tyranny of texts by embracing an anthropological-environmental approach, partially inspired by the ‘New Archaeology’, and a *longue durée* perspective in the spirit of the *Annales* School. Together with intensive fieldwork (both excavations and surveys) conducted in the highlands, the new paradigm

opened the door for innovative explanations concerning the emergence of ancient Israel (Bunimovitz 1995a: 65–67; Bunimovitz and Faust 2010: 47). This emergence was then considered as the outcome of socio-economic processes within Canaan rather than entry of people from elsewhere. The new explanations, however, were mainly functional and showed little interest in cultural processes of ethnogenesis, despite the fact that they aroused a lively debate about Israelite ethnicity (Finkelstein 1988; 1994; 1996a; Bunimovitz 1994a; Dever 1993; 1995). Notably, research concerning the Philistines was eclipsed in those years by an encompassing interest in the Iron Age I Israelite settlement phenomenon.

In recent years, new archaeological data, revised chronological schemes, critique of time-worn conventions and paradigms, and a growing interest in the symbolic aspects of culture (undoubtedly an impact of the current postprocessual era) have all blown fresh wind into the sails of Iron Age I archaeology in the southern Levant. A major portion of recent fieldwork and research is concerned with the heartland of Philistia and its periphery – regions where Egyptians, Philistines, Canaanites, and Israelites met and interacted politically and socially. New information stemming from both regions has brought into relief issues related to the chronology and character of this interaction as well as its cultural implications (domination and resistance, ethnic negotiation and demarcation, ethnogenesis, and more). The present study reviews developments in the archaeological investigation of early Iron Age Canaan, developments that have broadened our understanding of cultural processes during this formative period in the history of the region.

Setting the Stage: Canaan at the End of the Late Bronze Age

During the Late Bronze Age, Canaan was governed by one of the major powers of the eastern Mediterranean – the Egyptian New Kingdom. As evident from a variety of

Egyptian texts, especially the Amarna Letters, the politico-territorial landscape of the region in the heyday of the Eighteenth Dynasty (fifteenth–fourteenth centuries BC) comprised a few Egyptian garrison cities along the coast and inland, as well as an array of petty Canaanite kingdoms or city-states (Moran 1992; Bunimovitz 1995b: 326–27; Goren *et al.* 2004: 320–25). Although enjoying a certain amount of autonomous rule, the Canaanite city-states suffered from sharp demographic decline, coupled with compulsory obligations to their Egyptian overlords. This double burden and the need of local elites to maintain their status and rule had a heavy, negative impact on Canaanite economic and social systems (Bunimovitz 1994b). As archaeological excavations and surveys made us aware, Late Bronze Age Canaan exhibited a general poverty in both its urban culture and its countryside (Gonen 1984; London 1992; Herzog 2003). Moreover, the weakness of the Canaanite city-states enabled the rise of a substantial body of non-sedentary elements outside the established social systems, mainly the *ʿApiru* (social outcasts, refugees, or runaways) and the *Sutu* (pastoral nomads) (Naʾaman 1986; Rainey 1995; Bunimovitz 1994a: 193–202; see further below).

The growing insecurity in Canaan that resulted from such unruly elements roaming the countryside without interference led to changes in both the nature and extent of Egyptian involvement in the land during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties (thirteenth to first half of the twelfth centuries BC). Egyptian sources and archaeological data alike suggest that the pharaohs of these dynasties took vigorous measures to pacify Canaan: punitive expeditions against the non-sedentary groups; annexation and direct rule; erection of a network of ‘Governor’s Residencies’ in the main city-states, especially in the southern coastal plain and the adjacent Shephelah (low hills); economic exploitation of the country, and more (see, e.g., Weinstein 1981: 17–23; Singer 1988; for a different interpretation, see Higginbotham 2000).

Two famous Egyptian sources put their finger on the pulse of these days: Merneptah’s Hymn of Victory (or ‘Israel’) Stela

from his fifth year of reign (ca. 1207 BC), with corresponding reliefs at the Karnak temple, and Ramesses's III inscriptions and reliefs on the walls of his mortuary temple at Medinet Habu, recounting the sea and land battles against a coalition of invading 'Sea Peoples' during his eighth year (ca. 1175 BC). These sources bring into sharp relief (no pun intended) the main menace that threatened the Egyptian pharaohs at the turn of the thirteenth century BC: unsettled groups of people, either of local descent or immigrants from afar. It is rather telling that while Mernaptah boasts that Israel 'is laid waste, his seed is not', and Ramesses III claims to have been victorious over the Philistines and other Sea Peoples, both allegedly subjugated groups shaped the history of the country long after the Egyptians left Canaan.

Based on the latest Egyptian objects found in Canaan, Egypt must have retreated from the land late in the twelfth century BC, presumably during the reign of Ramesses VI (ca. 1143–1136 BC) (Weinstein 1992; Finkelstein 2000: 161–62). Without Egyptian hegemonic control, Canaan was left to its own destiny for 200 years, until the next Egyptian intervention in the affairs of the land during the Twenty-Second Dynasty (Shoshenk's I campaign in late tenth century BC). This left ample ground and time for local and newly arrived entities to establish themselves in Canaan and negotiate their identities through a variety of social and cultural processes.

Aegean Migration and Colonization: The Philistines in Canaan

The migration of the Philistines to the southern coast of Canaan as part of the Sea Peoples phenomenon has been the subject of intense historical, philological, and archaeological research for more than a century. Until recently, this was the only group of Sea Peoples that had been satisfactorily located and comprehensively investigated. Now, tantalizing archaeological and textual evidence seems to attest to the settlement of yet another group of Philistines in the Amuq

Plain and the emergence there during the eleventh century BC of a powerful Philistine kingdom ('Land of Palistin') (Harrison 2009; Hawkins 2009: 166–72; cf. Singer 2012: 466–68).

In this respect, one must recall the sophisticated attempts to deconstruct the claim for Sea Peoples settlement along the Levantine littoral by promoting an alternative mercantile model for the arrival of Aegean-derived pottery there (Sherratt 1998; see also Bauer 1998). Admittedly, recent archaeological research, mainly at Tel Dor, has questioned the familiar picture based on Egyptian records (mainly the *Onomasticon* of Amenope and the Wenamun report), according to which two groups of Sea Peoples – the *Šikila/Tjekker* (SKL) and *Sherden* (ŠRDN) – settled along the Canaanite coast north of Philistia (Gilboa 2005; 2006–2007; cf. Mazar 1990: 305–306; Dothan and Dothan 1992: 213–14; Stager 1995: fig. 2). Notably, however, a thorough study of the Carmel coast, the 'Akko Plain and the Lebanese coast in the early Iron Age maintains that the mercantile model as an explanation for the occurrence of 'Sea Peoples' pottery (locally produced Mycenaean IIIC1 ware) is applicable (in part) only to the northern coast of Canaan but not to Philistia (Gilboa 2005; see also Barako 2000).

Indeed, current excavations in three towns of the Philistine Pentapolis – Ashkelon (Stager 2008), Ekron-Tel Miqne (Dothan and Gitin 2008), and Gath-Tell es-Safi (Maeir 2008a) – endorse the prevailing consensus about Philistine immigration into southern Canaan (see map, Figure 14.1). While the (in)famous equation of 'pots and people' has been the target of much scholarly criticism, it should be recognized that, in the Philistine case, it seems to work: not only pottery but a rich assemblage of material culture traits completely foreign to Canaanite cultural traditions suddenly appear in a restricted geographical area known from written sources to have been occupied by a certain group of people – the Philistines (for trait lists, see, e.g., Barako 2000: 522–24; Killebrew 2006–2007: 252–55; Maeir 2008b; and see Figure 14.2 – the Aegean-affiliated cylindrical loomweights from

Philistine Ashkelon). The only viable explanation for such a distinct culture change is migration (Bunimovitz and Yasur-Landau 1996; Killebrew 2006–2007: 255–57; Yasur-Landau 2010; Faust and Lev-Tov 2011; Maeir *et al.* 2013).

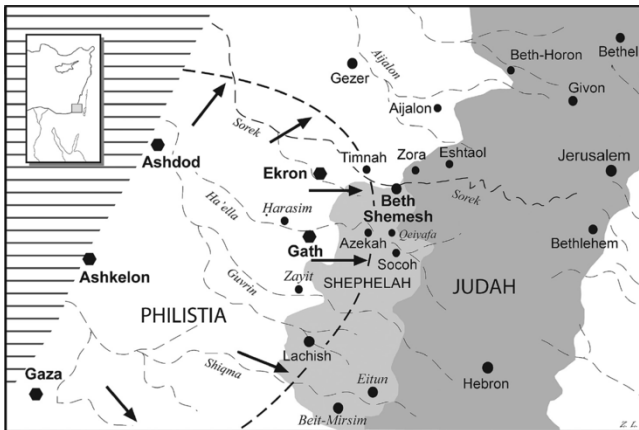


Figure 14.1. Map of southern Canaan: the Philistine heartland and its periphery.



Figure 14.2. Aegean-affiliated cylindrical loomweights from Iron Age I Philistine Ashkelon. Courtesy of L.E. Stager and D. Master, The Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon.

Since the Philistines were considered to be foreigners in Canaan, it is no wonder that the investigation of their sites and material culture focused first and foremost on the intriguing question of their origins. It is only in recent

decades that archaeologists began to question the full array of the complex cultural aspects related to Philistine migration and settlement in the new land, its political and cultural impact on the indigenous population, the symbolic meaning of their self-identification, and post-migration development processes as seen in Philistine material culture.

Before addressing these issues in more detail, it should be noted that two basic aspects of Philistine settlement in Canaan – its character and chronology – have recently been reassessed and challenged. Since these aspects are crucial for understanding and interpreting early Philistine cultural interaction, we review them first.

Egyptians and Philistines: Interaction and Ethnic Demarcation

Influenced by Ramesses III's victorious claims over the invading Sea Peoples, early scholars argued that the Egyptians themselves settled the defeated Philistines in their strongholds within southern Canaan. This idea was criticized on archaeological grounds by Bietak (1993) and Stager (1995: 340–44). Relying on the absence of Twentieth Dynasty monuments, buildings, and artifacts from heartland Philistia, on the one hand, and, on the other, the restricted distribution – only in this very region – of locally produced Mycenaean IIIC1 pottery (which supposedly represents the initial settlement of the Philistines: Mazar 1985; Singer 1985; Stager 1985), Bietak and Stager envisioned a different scenario. According to their reconstruction, the Philistines succeeded in carving out a territory for themselves in southern Canaan at the expense of the Egyptians and their Canaanites vassals. Ramesses III retreated inland to his already established strongholds, and contained the Philistines within a *cordon sanitaire*. His boasted victory over the Sea Peoples was, therefore, no more than a Pyrrhic one, and he was unable to reassert Egyptian hegemony over all of southern Canaan (for the consensus about the violent circumstances of Philistine settlement, see also Weinstein 1992; Bunimovitz 1998; Barako 2007).

This compelling view of events in southern Canaan during the first half of the twelfth century BC was harshly criticized. Anticipating a bidirectional movement of Mycenaean IIC1 and Egyptian(ized) pottery between contemporaneous Twentieth Dynasty Egyptian strongholds and Philistine sites, new critiques interpret the lack of evidence for such movement between the supposedly co-existing communities as decisive for their chronological separation. They argue, therefore, that Philistine settlement in southern Canaan began only after the reign of Ramesses VI, ca. 1130 BC (Finkelstein 1995; 2000; for an early statement, see Ussishkin 1985: 223).

Lurking within both the ‘cultural segregation’ and the ‘chronological separation’ views is the implicit premise, embedded within the tenets of both cultural-historical and processual paradigms, that there is a straightforward correlation between the extent of interaction between human groups and the degree of similarity in their material culture (Binford 1972a: 83; 1972b: 197–99; Hodder 1982: 8, with refs.). Relying on ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological evidence, Bunimovitz and Faust (2001) showed that this premise is flawed and that restricted distribution of artifacts does not contradict interaction. Material culture differences are not necessarily the result of a lack of between-group contact. Rather it is interaction that may increase the need for group self-identification (see, e.g., Barth 1969; Cohen 1974; Hodder 1982; Cohen 1985).

The material consequences of ethnic demarcation would be that some diacritical features chosen by the groups involved to mark their identity would have a restricted distribution over the social landscape. These observations are enough to cast doubt on the foundation of the low chronology suggested for the Philistine settlement. Furthermore, since symbolic delineation of group identity and boundaries is accentuated at times of competition (Cohen 1974: 92–95; Hodder 1982: 25–31; 1986: 2), items symbolizing cultural identity may be held back in spite of interaction. Since Philistine relations with the Egyptians during Iron Age I most probably were characterized by

animosity and strong competition over settlements, population, and resources, it is likely that the social meaning of the locally produced Mycenaean IIC pottery as well as its Egyptian counterpart prevented their movement and adoption outside the restricted zones in which they communicated group identity and cohesion (similarly Stone 1995: 23; Barako 2007; on the locally produced Mycenaean IIC as encapsulating Aegean/Philistine behavioral patterns, see Bunimovitz and Faust 2001: 7; Bunimovitz and Lederman 2010: 66).

Philistine and Canaanites: Settlement, Interaction, and Hybridization

While interaction between Philistines and Egyptians in southern Canaan took place between two hostile polities and resulted in a containment policy and identity demarcation, interaction between Philistines and Canaanites was more complex and carried significant consequences for both sides. First, it should be remembered that the Philistine–Egyptian encounter lasted only a few decades, from the days of Ramesses III to the final withdrawal of Egypt from Canaan ca. 1130 BC. In contrast, Philistine interaction with the indigenous population of southern Canaan continued for hundreds of years, until the Babylonian conquest of Philistia in 604 BC. Second, unlike the Egyptian government apparatus that retreated to the border of the Philistine entity and eventually left the region altogether, Canaanites interacting with Philistines either shared with them the same settlements or lived next to them in neighboring sites. These important issues need further elaboration, since they are the key to understanding the variety of identity processes stemming from the different contexts of Philistine–Canaanite interaction.

At the end of the Late Bronze Age, the southern coastal plain of Canaan and the adjacent Shephelah (lowland) were spotted with dozens of sites, undoubtedly the most densely populated area in the entire country at that time. In the Iron Age I, however, the number of sites dropped drastically

(Finkelstein 1996b; 2000). Further inquiry reveals a two-fold change in the settlement pattern of the southern part of the region, between Lachish and Tell es-Safi-Gath: on the one hand, an almost complete abandonment of the countryside, and, on the other, a great expansion of urban life. In sheer contrast, settlement in the northern Shephelah, from the Sorek Valley to the region of Gezer, continued almost unchanged (Shavit 2000: 215–17; Singer 1985:116–18). This pattern was interpreted by Bunimovitz (1998: 107–108; cf. Shavit 2008: 154–60; Faust 2013) as reflecting Philistine forced *syneocism* – a purposeful displacement of the Canaanite rural population from their own territory, relocating them in the main Philistine centers. Canaanite settlements at the periphery of heartland Philistia escaped this hostile takeover, at least for the initial stage of Philistine settlement.

It should be emphasized that the major urban centers of the Philistines in southern Canaan (the famous Pentapolis – Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath-Tell es-Safi, and Ekron-Tel Mique) were all long-established Canaanite cities inhabited by the indigenous population (Shai 2009). The coexistence of Philistines and Canaanites in the urban environment of heartland Philistia inevitably led to changes in the original cultural identity of both peoples (Yasur-Landau 2012).

It is clear today that many of the unique, Aegean-affiliated attributes of Philistine culture (e.g., pottery forms and decorations [Figure 14.3], special vessel types, hearths, loomweights, dietary habits, script, and more) were either abandoned or changed by the end of Iron Age I (Stone 1995; Uziel 2007; Faust and Lev-Tov 2011; for a different view, see Maeir *et al.* 2013). However, as conspicuously exemplified by the seventh-century BC royal dedicatory inscription established by King Achish/Ikausu (the Achaeon?) of Ekron in a monumental temple he built for his Mycenaean patron goddess *Ptgyh*, other cultural attributes (e.g., religious perceptions) seem to have survived much longer (Gitin *et al.* 1997; Demsky 1997; Schäfer-Lichtenberger 2000; Maeir *et al.* 2013). Furthermore, after hundreds of years of cultural interaction, Philistines were still referred to in Neo-Assyrian

texts as a distinct group with its own land and towns, in other words as a definable political and ethnic unit (Stone 1995: 19–20; Eph'al 1997: 32–33; Gitin 2004: 61).



Figure 14.3. Aegean-affiliated Bichrome Philistine pottery. While already showing signs of hybridization, its cultural message still symbolized ‘Philistine’ roots. (Collection of the Israel Antiquities Authority, Collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Photo © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.)

Scholars have variously interpreted the process of Philistine culture change as assimilation (e.g., Dothan 1982; 1998; Bunimovitz 1990), acculturation (e.g., Stager 1995: 335; Stone 1995; Gitin 1998; 2004), creolization (Ben-Shlomo *et al.* 2004; Killebrew 2005: 233; Maeir 2008b), transculturalism (Hitchcock 2011), entanglement (Hitchcock and Maeir 2013), or cultural fusion (for which the name ‘Canaano-Philistine’ or even ‘Neo-Philistine’ has been suggested; Gadot 2003: 255; Uziel 2007; Ben-Shlomo 2010: 176). These terms define different levels of interaction between an immigrant culture and the host culture, and the nature of the end product of this interaction: in ‘assimilation’, the original immigrant culture completely concedes to the host culture; in ‘acculturation’, there are certain elements left; while in ‘creolization’, ‘entanglement,’ and ‘fusion’ the new culture combines both elements and creates a new cultural entity.

Assimilation does not concur with the new archaeological data from Philistia, while the concept of acculturation also seems to fall short of the intricate process of Philistine cultural transformation. First, as an interpretive framework for studying cultural contacts, acculturation has been widely criticized, mainly for its outdated theoretical basis and one-sided approach, ignoring the complex, multidirectional cultural influences involved in colonial encounters (see Knapp 2008: 53–57). Indeed, acculturation has normally been used to explain the major influence of the local Canaanite population over the incoming Philistines. Only recently has the issue of Philistine influence over their Canaanite subordinates and neighbors begun to be addressed (see, e.g., Yasur-Landau 2005; Ben-Shlomo *et al.* 2008; Maeir 2008b; Bunimovitz and Lederman 2011). It seems, however, that as an explanatory model for the effects of Philistine–Canaanite interaction in Philistia and even beyond, hybridization better suits the data at hand than creolization or cultural fusion (van Dommelen 2006: 136–40; for critiques of the loose usage of the concept of creolization, see Stewart 2007; Eriksen 2007).

Emerging as a key concept in postcolonial and cultural studies, hybridization describes the mixture of people and material objects created by colonial encounters that reflects ambivalence toward either a dominant colonial identity or a subservient indigenous one. Neither colonial norms nor indigenous traditions survive intact in such situations, and both give way to new, more ambiguous social and material practices, to new perceptions concerning the meanings and memories of peoples and things. For archaeologists, the concept of hybridization practices – as a social, material, or cultural mixture – has the potential to refine the understanding of any contact situation involving colonization, migration, or ‘acculturation’ (Papastergiadis 1997; van Dommelen 1997; Knapp 2008: 57–61, with further refs.).

Since space does not allow exposition of all insights gained by applying the concept of hybridization to the Philistine case, a few examples must suffice. Following the Philistine

introduction to Canaan of an Aegean-inspired material culture, hybridized forms of artifacts began to appear in Philistia and Philistine-affiliated sites. Some of these innovative items, related to the domestic sphere, may have resulted from intercultural marriage; they either disappeared soon thereafter (e.g., perforated cylinder-shaped loomweights; Yasur-Landau 2009; see Figure 14.4), or survived into Iron Age II, leading to changes in local behavioral patterns (e.g., cooking jugs; Yasur-Landau 2005; Ben-Shlomo *et al.* 2008). Hybridization practices may also be detected in Philistine iconography, which turned into a regional phenomenon combining elements from both Aegean and Canaanite/Levantine traditions (Ben-Shlomo 2010).



Figure 14.4. A product of Philistine hybridization: perforated cylinder-shaped loomweights from Tel Qasile, combining Aegean and Canaanite traditions. (Courtesy of A. Mazar, Tel Qasile Expedition.)

It should be emphasized, however, that while the material culture of Philistia might be interpreted as attesting to cultural merging and the emergence of a ‘Canaanite-Philistine’ culture, it seems that identities did not follow suit. As apparent from the Ekron royal dedicatory inscription, after many generations of hiding behind West Semitic names (e.g., Ya^cir, Ada, Ysd, and Padi), the rulers of Ekron still carried with them an Aegean identity (and, eventually, origin memories) as epitomized by King Ikausu, son of Padi.

This raises again an old and as yet unresolved issue about the status and number of Philistine immigrants to Canaan: did they comprise only a small elite or a multitude of commoners (e.g., Finkelstein 2000: 172, *contra* Stager 1995: 344–45)? One may assume that their numbers and their social fabric influenced the character of hybridization practices carried out in Philistia.

While much effort has been invested in studying culture change in heartland Philistia, research on Philistine–Canaanite interaction and its cultural impact on the Philistine periphery has been rather modest (see, e.g., Mazar 1994; 2006: 327–28; Panitz-Cohen and Mazar 2006: 134–37; Faust and Katz 2011; Faust 2012). This important issue has now been thoroughly addressed by the renewed excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh in the Sorek Valley, at the northern outskirts of Philistia (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008; 2009; 2011).

In a sequence of four successive Iron Age I levels exposed at Beth-Shemesh by the present expedition, Canaanite cultural traditions appear to be dominant (in architecture, pottery [Figure 14.5], bronze production, and more). Locally produced Mycenaean IIIC1 pottery related to the initial phase of Philistine settlement (above) is completely missing. Moreover, contrary to intuitive suppositions by the early excavators of the site, current quantitative analysis of the pottery retrieved clearly indicates that only a meager amount of Aegean-style pottery (decorated and undecorated) of the Bichrome phase (about 5% of the total recovered) reached the site (Figure 14.6). Other items of Philistine type or affiliation are also missing. Furthermore, pork consumption was completely avoided at Beth-Shemesh in contrast to its heavy usage in the cuisine of adjacent Philistine sites (Figure 14.7; Bunimovitz and Lederman 2011; cf. Faust 2006: 35–48). It is also worth noting that the Late Bronze Age Canaanite diet included a small yet recognizable amount of pig meat.



Figure 14.5. Iron Age I pottery from Tel Beth-Shemesh reflects strong Canaanite traditions prevalent in the Shephelah and coastal plain alongside Philistine colonization. (Tel Beth-Shemesh Excavations, Bunimovitz and Lederman.)

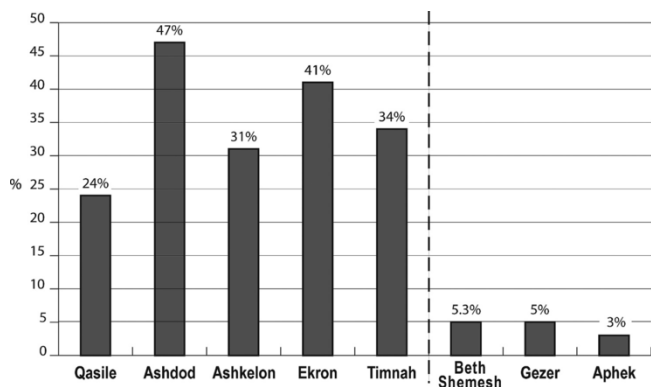


Figure 14.6. Comparative distribution of Aegean-style pottery (decorated and undecorated) of the Bichrome phase indicating a cultural border at the periphery of Philistia (see [Figure 14.1](#) for site locations; sources: Bunimovitz and Lederman 2011: n. 10).

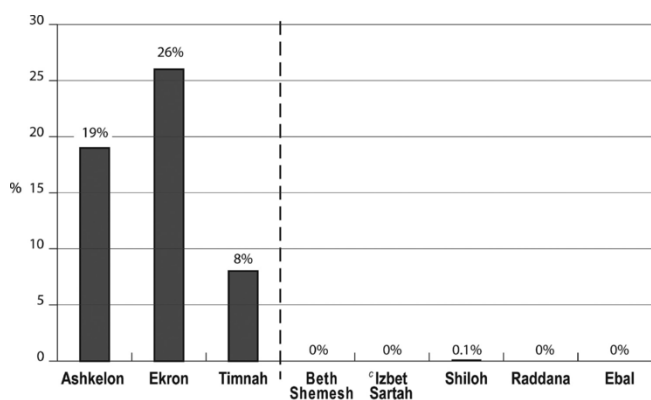


Figure 14.7. Pork consumption in contemporaneous Iron Age I sites, indicating pig taboo beyond the Philistine sphere of settlement and cultural influence (sources: Bunimovitz and Lederman 2011: n. 12).

This conspicuous distinction between closely neighboring sites cannot be related to economic and ecological factors and must be interpreted within a cultural perspective. We therefore have suggested that the arrival of the Philistines in southern Canaan and their further expansion out of their heartland created competition over land and resources, and led to the formation of social and cultural boundaries in the

region (see [Figure 14.1](#); Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008; 2009: 120–24; cf. Cohen 1974: 92–95; Hodder 1982: 31). As indicated above, Canaanites living in the territories occupied by the Philistines became part of the Philistine cultural sphere and were themselves implicated in the process of hybridization. Others, living at the periphery of Philistine rule – such as the people of Beth-Shemesh – took advantage of their location and resisted Philistine hegemony. By avoiding foodways and concomitant social habits that characterized their new neighbors (e.g., feasting and banqueting; Bunimovitz 1999; Bunimovitz and Faust 2001: 7; Maeir 2008b with refs.), these Canaanites identified themselves as ‘non-Philistine’. This process led to changes in their way of life and identity. Increased consumption of pork and Aegean-style pottery by the Philistines indicate that, in a mirror-like behavior, they also sharpened their self-definition vis-à-vis the Other at the border (Faust and Lev-Tov 2011). Intriguingly, the social and cultural processes at the boundary of Philistine territory had important repercussions beyond this region, as they are related to the Israelite ethnogenesis.

Cultural Counteraction: Canaanite Resistance and Israelite Ethnogenesis

The Iron Age I period in the southern Levant is characterized by a dramatic change in settlement patterns, marked by the sudden appearance of scores of small villages in the hilly zones, especially in the central highlands. Since this phenomenon has long been related to the emergence of ancient Israel, it was only natural that the mountainous region between Hebron and Shechem became the main focus of archaeological and historical research concerning Israelite origins and identity building. The inhabitants of these small, remote, and sometimes isolated sites were called ‘proto-Israelites’, and the investigation of their lifestyle, economy, and social framework became the study of ancient Israel in its formative period (for comprehensive summaries and bibliography, see, e.g., Finkelstein 1988; Finkelstein and Na’aman 1994; Stager 1998; Dever 2003).

While the question of Israelite origins in the sense of descent is interesting, it is irrelevant to the understanding of the nature and formation of Israelite ethnicity. Whether the ancestors of the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, semi-nomads in Transjordan or in the central highlands, Canaanite peasants, or a combination of some or all of the above is of lesser importance to the question of Israelite ethnogenesis – the moment the Israelites began to see themselves as distinct (Faust 2006). Moreover, the idea that the process of Israelite identity formation and self-definition took place in the central hills and therefore can best be traced in this area raises a few problems. These are related to the location of the process, the archaeological conditions needed for its investigation, and the adequacy of the data at hand.

First, ethnicity is not just the sum of pre-existing cultural differences but rather the result of a process of inclusion and exclusion that sets apart neighboring groups and differentiates one from the ‘other’ (e.g., Barth 1969; Cohen 1985; Jones 1997; Emberling 1997). This process and the unpredictable ethnic markers that a group chooses to stress are related to interaction with the Other and, as such, typically emerge in a contact zone, i.e., the group’s territorial boundaries, rather than at its heartland. Second, if identity building is a process, then a time perspective is required to trace changes in a group’s behavior. In archaeological terms, this means a long stratigraphic sequence is needed in order to study such changes. Since most of the hill country, ‘proto-Israelite’ sites are only of a single period, they provide mere snapshots of a complicated story they cannot fully tell. Third, while the discourse about the emergence of Israel has become more sophisticated theoretically, no new archaeological information has been added to the discussion since the 1980s, when the foundations of our current knowledge about Iron Age I settlement in the highlands were laid by excavations at a number of sites in this region, as well as by intensive archaeological surveys (e.g., Finkelstein 1988).

In light of these difficulties, the importance of archaeological investigations at multi-period sites such as

Tel Beth-Shemesh at the geographical and cultural border between the Canaanite/Philistine Shephelah and the 'proto-Israelite' central highlands cannot be exaggerated. As shown above, it yielded intriguing insights about Iron Age I identity politics on the border, a factor that brings us to suggest that a significant (if not crucial) part of the process in which 'Israel' became a separate entity was a response to Philistine settlement and expansionist policy; as such, it became 'diffused' from the lowlands up to the highlands (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008; for a similar idea, see Faust 2006).

The biblical texts portray the Philistines as the Israelites' main antagonist or principal Other. Of more than 900 biblical references to Israel's foes, 46% refer to the Philistines, 30% to Egypt, 18% to the Transjordanian peoples of Ammon, Moab, and Edom, along with Amalek, and 6% to the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. Most interestingly, 76% of the references to Philistines, Philistia, and its cities are related to the time period in Israel's history considered as Iron Age I, while only 24% are related to Iron Age II, mainly to the Neo-Assyrian period (Gitin 1998: 163; see also Dothan and Cohn 1994; Machinist 2000: 67–69).

Previous research has emphasized security problems posed by the Philistines as a major factor in the formation of the Israelite state, which signaled the crystallization of Israelite ethnicity (e.g., Finkelstein 1989, and refs.). However, major traits that served as Israelite ethnic markers had appeared already in Iron Age I, and could have developed only as part of interactions with the Philistines and in opposition to their ethnic markers (Faust 2006). As we have seen, in Iron Age I, Philistine pressure and expansionist efforts led to strong resistance at the periphery of heartland Philistia. Many scholars today agree that ethnogenesis – the birth of new cultural identities – is defensive, a response to outside threat, competition, or aggression. In other words, it is a form of resistance. Identities provide ontological security ('we-ness' vs. 'other'-ness) in cases of social conflict (Voss 2008: 1; Faust 2006: 136, 138; Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008: 26–27, with refs.). Within this context, it is illuminating that the origins of some conspicuous Israelite

ethnic markers, e.g., avoidance of pork consumption and decorated pottery, and even the famous Israelite dwelling – the four-room house (Faust and Bunimovitz 2003), are rooted in the Shephelah, in the Philistine-Canaanite border zone (see above; Bunimovitz and Lederman 2008: 24).

It is therefore reasonable to suggest that from the emerging cultural boundary between Canaanites and Philistines, a variety of taboos and local cultural traits could have spread eastward into the hill country, where they would have become shared cultural values of the various groups settled there. Eventually, we would argue, they became ethnic markers. This reconstruction has far-reaching implications for understanding the Israelite ethnogenesis. Instead of regarding the process as one taking place in the central hill country and later encompassing the peripheries of that region, we would reverse the direction of at least part of it: from the western frontier with the Philistines, where the indigenous population was forced to redefine its identity as a result of daily existential competition with the Philistines, inland into the relatively sheltered mountain area that slowly succumbed to Philistine pressure. According to this interpretation, the emergence of a social and symbolic boundary at the western periphery of the hill country had a profound impact on its core. Israelite identity seems to have been forged to some extent under the Philistine hammer.

Concluding Remarks

The Iron Age I period in the southern Levant saw the emergence of new ethnic entities. Our discussion has brought into relief the important role played by immigrant Philistines in the process of ethnic negotiation and demarcation that took place in Canaan upon their arrival and settlement. Like a stone thrown into a pond of still water, the Philistines aroused a series of concentric waves of cultural dialogues in which they and the local Canaanite population were involved. The end result of these dialogues, or rather identity politics, was hybridization in heartland Philistia, resistance on its border zone, and ethnogenesis in

the highlands.

Acknowledgments

The ideas expressed in this article were shaped in the course of our ongoing (since 1990) Renewed Excavation Project at Tel Beth-Shemesh, currently under the auspices of the Institute of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University. The authors are indebted to Norman and Marilyn Tayler from Bethesda, Maryland, and the Goldhirsh Foundation for their generous support. The research was also supported by the Israel Science Foundation (Grant nos. 898/99; 980/03; 1068/11) and an Early Israel grant (New Horizons Project), Tel Aviv University.

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15 Cultural Interactions in Iron Age Sardinia

Carlo Tronchetti

Abstract

During the Bronze Age, Sardinia was already part of a network of relationships and contacts with other eastern and western Mediterranean populations. In the Iron Age, Nuragic social organisation was transformed, and as Sardinians managed contacts with Villanovan and Levantine peoples, they carefully selected ideological contributions and foreign materials, changing, adapting and integrating them into their own culture. Phoenicians first established themselves within Nuragic communities and later in coastal settlements, where their presence favoured the integration process. It contributed to the creation of a culture that was neither Nuragic nor Phoenician but that we can define as Sardinian.

In this chapter, I intend to examine the island of Sardinia during the Iron Age to identify the types of interactions between the local Nuragic culture, which was already open to Mediterranean contacts in the Recent and Final Bronze Ages, and other populations around the Tyrrhenian Sea and in the Near East. Interactions between the newly arrived and local Nuragic peoples resulted in mixed communities, which can be defined as Sardinian and who incorporated both material and ideological elements from both cultures, which in turn led to the creation of a new social structure (van Dommelen 1998; Bernardini 2007). This study therefore

does not so much examine contacts between Nuragic populations with Villanovans, Phoenicians and Etruscans from the point of view of commercial relationships or colonial settlements as it explores the hybridisation processes of the ‘Middle Ground’, where different cultures come together and weave their relationships (Malkin 2002; van Dommelen 2005).

Chronology

The name ‘Iron Age’ has no single chronological meaning in the Mediterranean. As Hodos (2009) has recently made clear, its location in time depends on local contexts. The Iron Age can be considered as the moment when processes of change came to full development that had been underway since the Bronze Age. In terms of absolute chronology, I keep to the traditional dating based on Greek pottery that I believe finds substantial support in both the eastern Mediterranean (Waldbaum and Magness 1997; Finkelstein 1999; Nuñez Calvo 2008) and the western basin (for Phoenician colonisation, see Botto 2005; 2007; 2008). This provides a structural grid that can obviously be nuanced but not easily revised radically (see Bartoloni and Nizzo 2005; D’Agostino 2005; De Marinis 2005; Kourou 2005; *contra* Bietti Sestieri and De Santis 2008). As far as Etruria and Latium are concerned, I will refer to the table presented by Menichetti (2000) that accepts the Villanovan phases as proposed by Bartoloni (2002: 107). For the Greek world, I agree with the traditional chronology of Coldstream. These references cannot be uncritically and mechanically applied to Sardinia, and the start and end dates of the phases therefore do not coincide – as is indeed the case throughout the Mediterranean.

Table 15.1. Comparative chronological table as discussed in the text.

Etruria	Lazio	Greece	Sardinia
Final Bronze Age	Final Bronze Age	Geometric Period	Final Bronze Age

1200–1000	1200–1000	1100–750	1200–ca. 900
Start of Iron Age	Start of Iron Age		
1000	1000		
	1st Laziale period		
	1000–900		
1st Villanovan Period	2nd Latial Period		1st Iron Age
900–820	A 900–830		ca. 900–800
Intermediate 820–770	B 830–770		
2nd Villanovan Period			2nd Iron Age A
770–720	3rd Latial Period		800–625
	A 770–750		
	B 750–725		
Orientalising Period	4th Latial Period	Orientalising Period	
Old 720–670	A 725–625	725–610	
Middle 670–630	B 625–580		
Late 630–580			2nd Iron Age B
			625–509

From Menichetti [2000](#).

We can assign the beginning of the Sardinian Iron Age to the decades between the tenth and ninth centuries BC. This period marks a clear break with the previous Final Bronze Age. The most striking changes can be found in the architecture, as new *nuraghi* were no longer built in this period. Some of the existing ones were abandoned, whilst others underwent a change in function; their external walls no longer served a defensive function, as is shown by habitations built on top of them. In some Nuragic

complexes, the main tower was reused as a shrine. These changes may also be found together in the same complex.

Another element of marked differentiation between the Final Bronze Age and the Iron Age is constituted by funerary rituals. In the Bronze Age, the dominant burial tradition – at least the one which has left evident archaeological traces – involved the so-called ‘Giants’ Tombs’, which are elongated structures fronted by a monumental exedra. They are collective burial monuments that were used over a long period of time by members of a community (Blake 2002). From around 900 BC, however, individual burials in single pits appeared. There are also some individual trench graves, but these would seem to date to a later phase (cf. below).

It is clear that the period under examination is marked by significant structural changes in Bronze Age society. The phenomena described are only the tip of the proverbial iceberg that we can use to signal the transition to the Iron Age, which of course did not occur overnight but was the result of a slow process of transformation.

Our current state of knowledge is unfortunately not particularly advanced for either the Bronze or the Iron Ages. Of the 7000 *nuraghi* known, very few have been carefully excavated, and even fewer have been published. The same can be said for the well-temples and villages without *nuraghi*, and the evidence at our disposal is limited, fragmentary and widely dispersed throughout the island. The latter point is particularly important, as Sardinia is geographically very diverse (Figure 15.1).

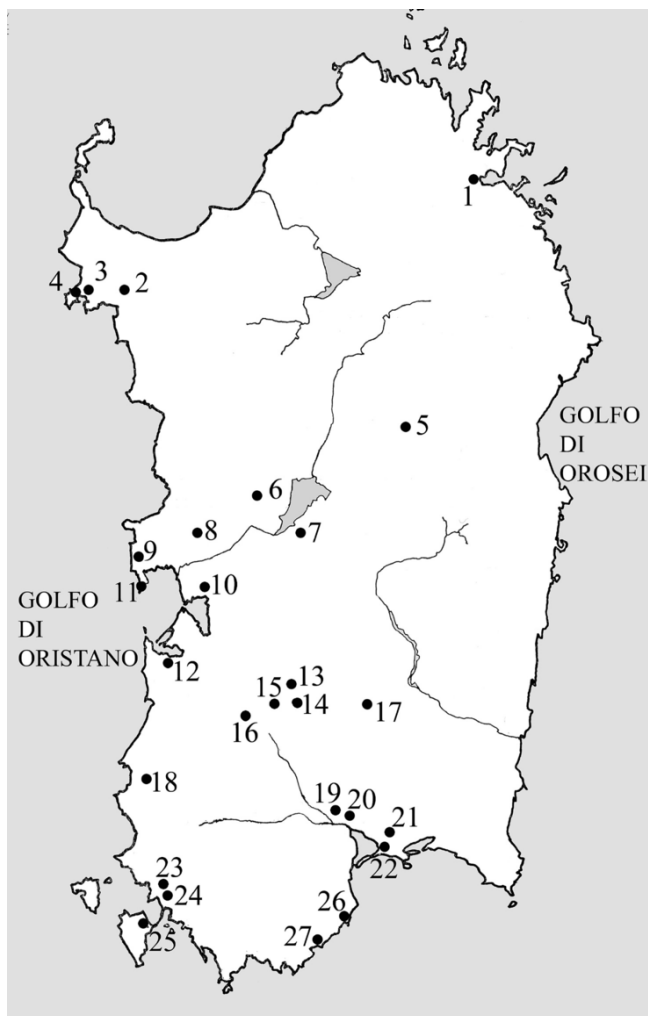


Figure 15.1. Places cited in the text: 1. Olbia; 2. Nuraghe Flumenelengu (Alghero); 3. Nuraghe Palmavera (Alghero); 4. Nuraghe S. Imbenia (Alghero); 5. Nurdole (Orani); 6. Santa Cristina (Paulilatino); 7. Su Monte (Sorradile); 8. Nuraghe S'Uraki (S. Vero Milis); 9. Monte Prama (Cabras); 10. Othoca (Santa Giusta); 11. Tharros (Cabras); 12. Neapolis (Terralba); 13. Nuraghe Su Nuraxi (Barumini); 14. Nuraghe Su Mulinu (Villanovafranca); 15. Nuraghe Gennamaria (Villanovaforru); 16. Sant'Anastasia (Sardara); 17. Senorbì; 18. Antas (Fluminimaggiore); 19. San Sperate; 20. Monastir; 21. Settimo San Pietro; 22. Cagliari; 23. Monte

Sirai (Carbonia); 24. Nuraghe Sirai (Carbonia); 25. Sulci (Sant'Antioco); 26. Nora (Pula); 27. Bithia (Domusdemaria).

Areas such as the Oristanese on the central west coast and the Nuorese in the mountains of the interior have notably different potential. The former region offers a number of good landing places, as well as routes that penetrate into the deepest parts of the island; the rich lowlands are well suited for farming and grazing, while the extensive lagoons offer plentiful hunting and fishing; the hinterland harbours notable mineral resources. The latter region in the heart of the island is by contrast harsh and mountainous and suitable only for grazing. Its metal ores are not insignificant, but their potential for mining is dependent on the coast for the distribution of its products. This does not mean, of course, that the interior of Sardinia lacks high concentrations of wealth; we shall indeed see that the opposite is true. But the structures and answers that are framed by these differences are real and evident and cannot easily be ignored.

If it is relatively easy to identify a conventional date for the beginning of the Iron Age in Sardinia, it is much more problematic to set one for its end. Tracing some cultural features through time and isolating them from their contexts results in a final phase of the Iron Age that falls in fully 'historical' times, sometimes well into the Common Era. In these cases, I believe it is better to speak of 'areas characterised by a residual mode of production' rather than to chase mirages of past eras that seem to be led more by modern ideologies than reflect ancient situations.

From the start of the ninth century BC, Sardinia was involved in a series of developments, such as closer contact with Levantine people, the establishment of new settlements, the creation of a new ethnic group which we can call 'Sardinian' and the rise of Carthage. Over time, this resulted in a new organisation of space, means of production and Sardinian society overall.

It is not easy to find a fixed point in these unfolding and intertwined processes, as it is not possible to identify a clear

break. In conventional terms, Piero Bartoloni (1981) has pointed to the radical change in funerary rites in 'Phoenician' settlements, which he related to the arrival of Carthaginian migrants: whilst Phoenician cemeteries are characterised by cremation burials down to the sixth century BC, by the end of that century inhumation rapidly became the preferred burial method in sarcophagi, single-trench graves or chamber tombs of a range of forms.

The second half of the sixth century BC is a major watershed in the western Mediterranean, as it saw the emergence of a new order as Carthage rose to power and prominence. The so-called battle of Alalia (Corsica) and the first Roman-Carthaginian treaty of 509 BC are key events recorded by historical sources for the process that brought Sardinia under Carthaginian influence (Gras *et al.* 2000: 287–91). I therefore suggest the end of the sixth century as a conventional lower limit to the Sardinian Iron Age, with the date of the first Roman-Carthaginian treaty as a notional marker of the new situation on the island.

The proposed timeline is not entirely new. Lilliu (1982) already placed the first part of the Iron Age between 900–500 BC (followed by a second phase that reached down to 238 BC, the year of the Roman conquest), and Webster (1996) likewise divides the Iron Age into two phases, which he labels Geometric (ca. 900–750 BC) and Orientalising (750–500 BC). More recently, Ugas (2009) has proposed a chronology that is overall very similar to the one adopted here, but he suggests a much more finely grained articulations (Geometric I 900–859/800; Geometric II 800–725; Old Orientalising 725–670; Mid-Evolved 670–600; Archaic 600–480). His criteria for these subdivisions, however, depend rather too heavily on external chronological and cultural parameters.

Changing Connections

It seems obvious that the Iron Age was not and cannot be considered a unified whole but that complex events unfolded

in the course of these 400 years.

With the start of the Iron Age, around 900 BC, as I already mentioned, *nuraghi* were no longer built. Some were abandoned, others continued to be used and others still were given new cultic functions. It seems that the situation on the island no longer pushed communities to build the large defensive structures of the Bronze Age; the walls with towers (bulwarks) that surrounded the most important Nuragic complexes also changed function, as houses were built against them or in some cases even on top of them. The massive defensive walls thus became a mere structural element or were obliterated by new civil buildings.

This phenomenon is found in different parts of the island and clearly indicates important structural and organisational changes of late Nuragic populations that resulted in a different territorial organisation or at least different behaviour of the communities involved. We do not know whether this development was related to a fragmentation of power, which could have made the powerful defences redundant. This discussion is purely hypothetical, however, as we are poorly informed about the spatial organisation and ‘politics’ of local communities in both the Late Bronze and Iron Ages.

Settlement analysis in this period may give us some insight into social organisation. The end of the Bronze Age saw the emergence of a new house type that became a hallmark of the Iron Age and that is defined by the living spaces grouped around a central courtyard. The earlier Bronze Age houses had by contrast consisted of single-room round huts of various dimensions that were usually laid out without much apparent order. The Iron Age houses with a central courtyard effectively brought together adjacent single-room houses that sometimes even shared a wall and were arranged around a courtyard, which was in turn connected to the outside by a short corridor (Figure 15.2). Within each village several courtyard houses coexisted, which we can imagine as inhabited by an extended family or similar socio-economic group. Not infrequently, these houses include a room that stands out because of a prominent centrally

placed stone basin, whose function is unclear, however. Interpretations range from rooms for bread baking to the more plausible explanation that they served a domestic water cult. Since water cults are known from dozens of well-temples, connected to springs, the latter interpretation seems the most likely.

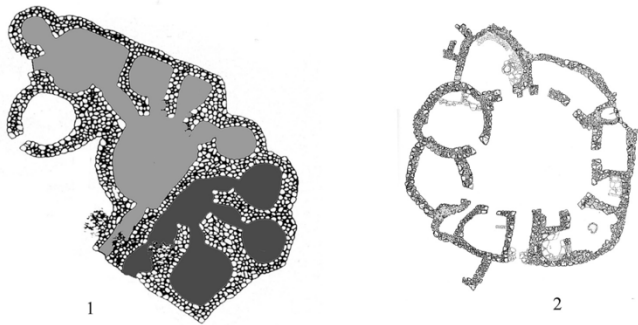


Figure 15.2. 1. Huts with central courtyard at Serra Orrios, Dorgali (Moravetti 2005: fig. 35). 2. Hut with central courtyard from *nuraghe* Serucci, Gonnese (Santoni and Bacco 2008: fig. 1).

By the end of the Final Bronze Age, another new type of building appeared in both villages and sanctuaries. While they resemble living rooms in structure and appearance, the new structures were notably larger and are distinguished by a low bench that runs along most of the wall. These so-called ‘meeting huts’ also frequently included a stone model of a *nuraghe* that could be used as an altar (Ugas 1989–1990; Santoni and Bacco 2008). These sculptures are of varying sizes and were placed in a niche in the wall or in the centre of the hut, usually as part of a purpose-built structure; they always stood in a prominent position (Ugas 1986: 184–85). It has been calculated that there was seating for 43 persons in the meeting hut of *Nuraghe* Palmavera (Alghero). The generally accepted interpretation sees this as the place where important people, such as heads of families from the village or from the wider community, met to discuss problems of general interest under the protection of the *nuraghe*, which had become a symbol of memory and a territorial focal point. It presumably became an object of

worship as a cultic object and altar at the same time. Some *nuraghi* themselves were used as places of worship. The best-known instances are the *nuraghi* of Gennamaria (Villanovaforru) and of Su Mulinu (Villanovafranca). The latter included an altar which had partly been sculpted to represent a miniature *nuraghe*, and the stratigraphy of this context clearly confirms the Iron Age date of the phenomenon (Ugas 1989–1990).

Even with a change of function, the *nuraghi* thus remained a strong unifying element. That should not lead us to ignore that villages without *nuraghe* existed in both the Bronze and Iron Ages. The remains of these villages are, however, poorly visible in the landscape because their houses consisted of stone walls bound with mud or a stone foundation surmounted by mud-bricks; they were probably covered by branches. Given the rarity of intensive and systematic surveys, it is difficult to estimate how widespread (or limited) these villages are.

Although the absence of cemeteries and the relatively low number of settlements have been taken to imply that population numbers in Sardinia declined sharply during the Iron Age, there is an abundance of other kinds of archaeological evidence to argue the opposite. It shows that late Nuragic communities fared very well during the ninth century BC and even more so in the eighth and seventh centuries, as they continued to manage the territory and its resources. It is precisely the expanding distribution of Sardinian objects in the western Mediterranean and a thriving production of both figurative and utilitarian bronzes that suggest that the latter view is the most likely one.

This is supported by the material culture itself, both by that produced on the island itself and exported elsewhere in the Mediterranean, and by that imported from other regions. It should be noted that many scholars have underlined the likelihood that Sardinians played a key role in the distribution of luxury eastern and western objects on the Italian peninsula, as for instance in the Piediluco-Contigliano and S. Francesco hoards (Lo Schiavo and Ridgway 1987; Bartoloni 2002). This role as ‘mediator’ between east and

west has also been noted for the Final Bronze Age and is nicely demonstrated by the Atlantic-type *obelos* or spit that is found in both the Sardinian Monte Sa Idda hoard and in Cyprus at Amathus (Karageorghis and Lo Schiavo 1989).

Throughout the ninth century, late Nuragic communities maintained extensive contact with the Levantine people and the Villanovan communities of the Italian peninsula. The Lipari islands of the southern Tyrrhenian Sea represent another point of contact (Ferrarese Ceruti 1987), while objects from the Iberian peninsula show how the island was a crossroads for Tyrrhenian traffic (Lo Schiavo and Ridgway 1987).

During this period, connections with the Italian peninsula, especially with the mining regions of Etruria, remained close, and it was probably through these areas that Sardinian objects travelled to both northern and southern central Italy (e.g. the San Francesco and Piediluco-Contigliano hoards in Bologna and Umbria, and finds in Pontecagnano). To Sardinia came weapons, tools and amber for ornaments and especially *fibulae* (brooches; Figure 15.3). The brooches are particularly interesting, as they are relatively abundant in Iron Age contexts, even if the bronze statuettes demonstrate that Sardinian clothes had no need for *fibulae*. All brooches have been imported from outside the island and invariably have been found in sanctuaries (Lo Schiavo 2002: 63). Given their association with clothing, these *fibulae* thus suggest that exotic central Italian clothing reached Sardinia, and it has been suggested that these exchanges point to marriage between Sardinian and Villanovan families and clans. Evidence suggestive of this view is provided by the three Nuragic bronzes found in a Villanovan burial in the Cavalupo cemetery at Vulci that has been dated to the last decades of the ninth century BC (Bernardini 2002).

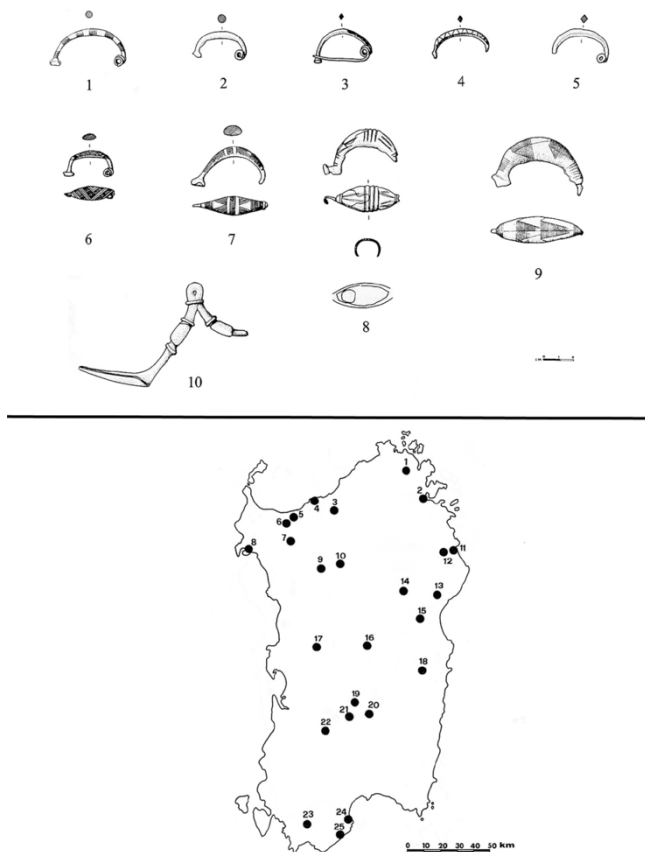


Figure 15.3. Selection of *fibulae* from Sardinia (9–7th c. BC). 1. Posada (NU); 2. Nuraghe Attentu (SS); 3. S. Anastasia di Sardara (CA); 4. Sa Sedda ‘e sos Carros (Oliena-NU); 5. Forraxi Nioi (Nuragus-NU); 6. Posada (NU); 7. Posada (NU); 8. S. Cristina di Paulilatino (OR); 9. Forraxi Nioi (Nuragus-NU); 10. Nuraghe Su Nuraxi (Barumini-CA); (revised from Tronchetti 1988: fig. 3). Fibulae distribution map (Lo Schiavo and Ridgway 1987: fig. IV).

The many Sardinian objects in the Etruscan cemeteries in the mining district of north Etruria may represent another case in point, although it has also been suggested that the wider range of Sardinian connections in this area, in particular in Populonia, may rather be interpreted as evidence of Sardinian artisans. The use of so-called ‘false cupola’ constructions in monumental tombs is especially

suggestive in this respect (Colonna 1986: 384; 2000a: 254–55; more doubtful Bartoloni 2000: 20). It is in any case clear that north-central Sardinia and (late) Villanovan Etruria were connected by strong and reciprocal relationships that were evidently linked to the shared mining and metallurgical industries of the regions. From the end of the ninth century, these relationships became more intensive and Sardinian bronze objects were also exchanged beyond the region, as is for instance demonstrated by such finds in burials at Pontecagnano, where they had most likely arrived from Tarquinia (Gastaldi 1994; Lo Schiavo 1994).

First Contacts

Crucially important for understanding the Sardinian Iron Age is the close relationship that Sardinians established with Levantine peoples.

Although the evidence is not particularly abundant during the ninth century, it increased over time, and we clearly see continuous contacts with the eastern Mediterranean and in particular with those people conventionally named Phoenicians. This term is based on Greek usage as a generic reference to the inhabitants of the Near East, which conflates various ethnic groups under a single heading and foregrounds those with whom the Greeks had most contacts (Murray 1924: 62.3).

During the ninth century, these contacts were sparse and ephemeral and amount to little more than a few bronze statues and other bronze objects, whose precise place of manufacture is debated (Bernardini and Botto 2010). Because it is unclear whether they are early eastern imports or local products that imitate older ones, these objects remain difficult to date with any certainty. A good case in point is the small tripod from the cave-sanctuary of Su Benatzu (Carbonia), where the uncertainty is exacerbated by the fact that the cave was in use from the recent Bronze Age to the early Iron Age (Figure 15.4: 1).



Figure 15.4. 1. Cypriot style bronze tripod from the cave-shrine of Su Benatzu, Carbonia (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari). 2. Cypriot torch-holder from *nuraghe* S'Uraki, San Vero Milis (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari). 3. Cypriot torch-holder from the sanctuary of Santa Vittoria, Serri (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari). 4. Cup, *pastiche* made of pieces of bronze, including Phoenician palmette from *nuraghe* Su Igante, Uri (Soprintendenza Archeologica Sassari). 5. Bronze cauldron from Cala Gonone (Soprintendenza Archeologica Sassari). 6. Bronze cauldron from the sanctuary of Sant'Anastasia, Sardara (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari). 7. Ceramic askoid jug from Cadice. 8. Ceramic askoid jug from Monte Canu (Soprintendenza Archeologica Sassari). 9. Ceramic askoid jug from the sanctuary of Su Monte, Sorradile (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari). 10. Bronze askoid jug from *Nuraghe* Ruju di Buddusò, decorated with Phoenician style palmette (Soprintendenza Archeologica Sassari) (not to scale).

The relationships between these Levantine people and Sardinia have usually been considered under the heading of 'precolonisation', which has, however, increasingly been called into question (e.g. Bernardini [2000a](#)). I agree with the view that this term is misleading because it implies a direct

relationship between earlier contacts and subsequent colonisation (to which I will return), as if it were cause and effect. The English word 'prospector' that is increasingly used in Italian has similar connotations of scouting out locations for future permanent settlements. It is for these reasons that I prefer to speak of an 'association' between, on the one hand, the ninth century BC and the first decades of the eighth century and, on the other hand, the time of the oldest evidence in Sulcis (Sant'Antioco) of a permanent 'Phoenician' foundation that is separate from late Nuragic settlements. The earlier period is best represented by the extraordinary discoveries at the Nuragic village of Sant'Imbenia (Alghero), where a Phoenician enclave was created in the Nuragic village between the end of the ninth and the beginning of the eighth century BC (Oggiano 2000; Depalmas and Rendeli 2012). The area around Alghero was evidently favourable for early contacts, as the area has also yielded a bronze statuette of eastern production. This was found at Flumenelongu and is part of a modest but notable group of bronze statuettes found in Nuragic sanctuaries that date to the ninth century BC. The case of Sant'Imbenia is not exceptional, and comparable contact situations are known elsewhere.

As far as permanent Phoenician settlements are concerned, the current evidence includes only one instance that predates the later seventh century BC, namely Sulcis. Often quoted finds such as the famous Nora stele are more likely to signal a place of worship at a seasonal stop-over or within an indigenous settlement, especially when there is no other archaeological evidence (Bonetto 2009: 73–78; Tronchetti 2010). It is difficult to know whether the initial contacts between the eastern visitors and indigenous communities was continuous or seasonal, or both, as may be most likely. The Homeric poems show that traders could stay at a single place for longer periods of time and make the most of local relationships and that they exchanged 'gifts' with local communities and their leaders in order to gain access to resources in the territory under their control. It is entirely plausible that similar situations occurred in Sardinia in the ninth and eighth centuries BC.

The most relevant and significant evidence undoubtedly comes from the already mentioned village of Sant'Imbenia (Alghero), where Phoenician and Greek pottery was found. This includes a Euboean pendent semi-circle *skyphos*, which is among the oldest, if not the oldest, example of this class of pottery found in the West. Domestic Phoenician pottery denotes their actual presence in the Nuragic village for some time, even if we cannot be sure whether their stay was seasonal or permanent

The pottery also comprises two amphorae of an evidently eastern shape, one of which was wheelmade and evidently imported, while the other one was handmade and clearly a local product (Oggiano 2000). Both vessels were partially filled with copper ingots, which evidently signals a foreign interest in metals.

But metal was not the only element that linked the Nuragic people and the Phoenicians. These amphorae were initially believed to have been produced in central Italy and were originally classified as ZitA after the German label *Zentral-italische Amphoren* (Docter 1998). While they have been construed as multi-purpose containers (Sanciu 2010: 4), they are more generally considered as containers for food products, especially wine (Oggiano 2000; Bernardini 2005; Pedrazzi 2005). These amphorae have a wide distribution both on Sardinia and throughout the western Mediterranean but are particularly well represented in Carthage and on the Iberian peninsula (Figure 15.5: 1). From the Italian peninsula, only sporadic finds have been reported, but this may be due to the very recent identification of this type of amphora, and it is likely that a targeted investigation of material from older excavations of eighth-century BC contexts would give interesting results. The site of San Rocchino in Versilia (northwest Tuscany) is illustrative in this respect, as it has yielded good evidence of both metallurgy and wine trade in association with a large variety of amphorae (Bonamici 2006). Recent archeometric analyses of ZitA amphorae in Sardinia show that Sant'Imbenia was not the only production centre, and at least several other ones were situated in the Oristano area (Napoli and

Auriscchio 2007; Roppa 2012).

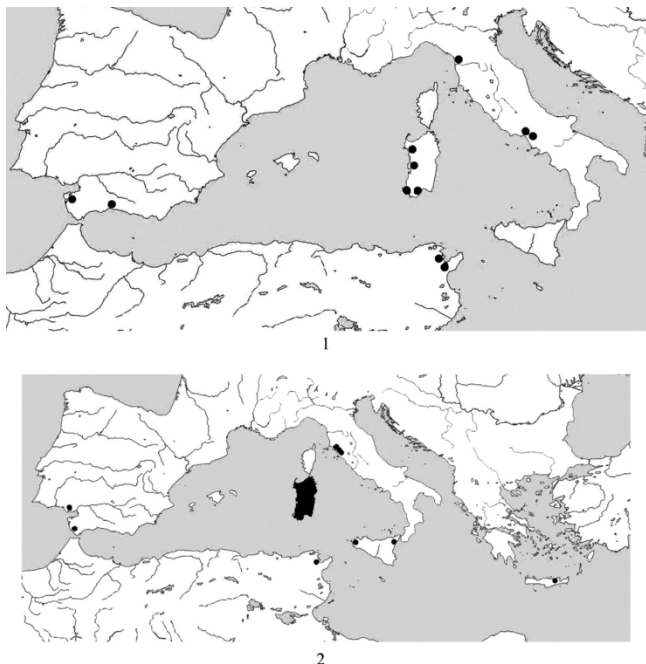


Figure 15.5. 1. Mediterranean distribution of the Zita amphorae (elaboration Tronchetti). 2. Mediterranean distribution of the askoid jugs (elaboration Tronchetti).

Many of these amphorae have been found in Carthage in levels dating between 760–675 BC, where they represent 38% of all imported amphorae (Docter *et al.* 2008: 387). In Spain, they are found in notable quantities, particularly at Huelva (González de Canales *et al.* 2006). Although the latter context is unstratified, it is worth noting that Nuragic pottery is barely outnumbered by Greek imports and that Zita amphorae occur alongside askoid jugs that are by far the most widespread Nuragic tableware found overseas (Figures 15.5: 2; 15.4: 7–10). The finds also include so-called necked vases that in Sardinia are usually found in Nuragic domestic contexts to store food. It is therefore not unreasonable to propose that Sardinian wine was transported in amphorae made on the island after eastern models and that they were probably transported by Phoenician ships, some of which may have had a mixed

crew of Phoenician and Nuragic people. Because the askoid jugs have been associated with wine drinking in Sardinia, the references to wine are particularly strong in this context (Sanges 2006).

In Sardinia, the ratio between Nuragic and Phoenician pottery is clearly tilted in favour of the former, but that does not undermine the above interpretation. As owners of the land and its resources, the Sardinians would be able to produce wine on a scale to satisfy not only domestic consumption but also demand from across the western Mediterranean. Phoenician settlers in indigenous communities may have started the process of integration that in time became more entrenched and widespread, especially on the west coast of the island, to the point that by the end of the seventh century BC, it has become difficult to draw sharp distinctions between Nuragic and Phoenician communities.

Not all instances of Sardinian material in foreign contexts can be interpreted in the same way. Contacts with the Villanovan area in particular were quite different, as they remained constant from the ninth to the beginning of the seventh century; they were probably conducted directly without other involvement. Contacts with the western Phoenicians were different again, as it is highly likely that the Nuragic material at Carthage, Motya and Crete arrived there with the Phoenician sailors. It is worth noting that only askoid jugs and no domestic vessels have been found at these sites, apart from the transport amphorae at Carthage.

Ideology and Social Organisation

The foundation of the first recognisably Phoenician settlement in Sulcis only shortly after Sant'Imbenia fits into this pattern of contact. The oldest finds date from the first decades of the eighth century BC (Bartoloni 2008: 1604) and document connections with the Phoenician motherland and the Greek, Tyrrhenian and Iberian worlds. The Phoenician settlement was thus fully engaged with the wider Mediterranean. There is also some indigenous pottery but

not much. The close relationships between the Nuragic communities at Sulcis and the newly arrived Phoenicians are most evident in the *tophet*, where the oldest Phoenician urns of the late eighth century are found alongside vessels that reproduce typically indigenous forms, sometimes adorned with foreign designs (Bartoloni 1985a). These can only be interpreted as evidence of mixed couples who treated their deceased child according to the rituals of one parent but used a container that belonged to the cultural world of the other, perhaps the female of the couple (Tronchetti 2005). A pot imported from Pithekoussai around the same time may be interpreted in an analogous way to suggest the presence of a Greek minority in this 'colonial' community (Tronchetti 1979).

Our serious lack of knowledge of Nuragic social organisation in the Bronze Age prevents us from understanding the impact and interactions with other peoples. There can yet be little doubt that for at least the whole eighth and much of the seventh century BC, the indigenous Sardinians had the upper hand and that they carefully selected those types of precious objects and ideological motives that suited them and that they reinterpreted, adapted and integrated into their own culture. On a general level, similar developments may be seen in other areas of the western Mediterranean, most of all on the Italian peninsula, where the emerging Tyrrhenian aristocracy distinguished themselves with precious and luxury goods that underwrote their ideological focus on military prowess and that was supported by the communal consumption of wine as a means of bringing together their social class.

Sardinia is part of this context in its own peculiar way, which is defined by its distinctive selection of 'imported' luxury goods. Whilst the large princely tombs of Tyrrhenian Italy are rich in foreign and locally made precious objects, the Sardinian funerary ideology created tombs that are practically empty of grave goods. There are no burials on the island that stand out from the rest and that could be

identified as belonging to a chief or clan leader. Exotic goods are, for example, very scarce (Figures 15.6; 15.4: 2–6): just three Phoenician/Cypriot-style bronze torch-holders are known, for instance, and all three date to between the eighth and seventh centuries BC and come from both settlement and ritual contexts (S'Uraki at San Vero Milis, Santa Vittoria near Serri and Su Monte of Sorradile). Another bronze incense burner and torch-holder come from unknown locations in the Oristano area, perhaps from the same sites as the three torch-holders. Three bronze cauldrons were found in the meeting hut of the sanctuary at Santa Anastasia (Sardara), and there are of course numerous *fibulae*. It should be noted that none of these objects come from domestic contexts but invariably from spaces associated with public authority and worship. Settlement excavations have never identified any houses whose structures or material culture stand out from the rest, and we can only surmise that goods were accumulated at the community level, rather than at household or individual levels. The emergence of courtyard houses in the Iron Age would seem to support the view that social organisation was based on kinship and communal identity, in which there was no place for prominent individuals.

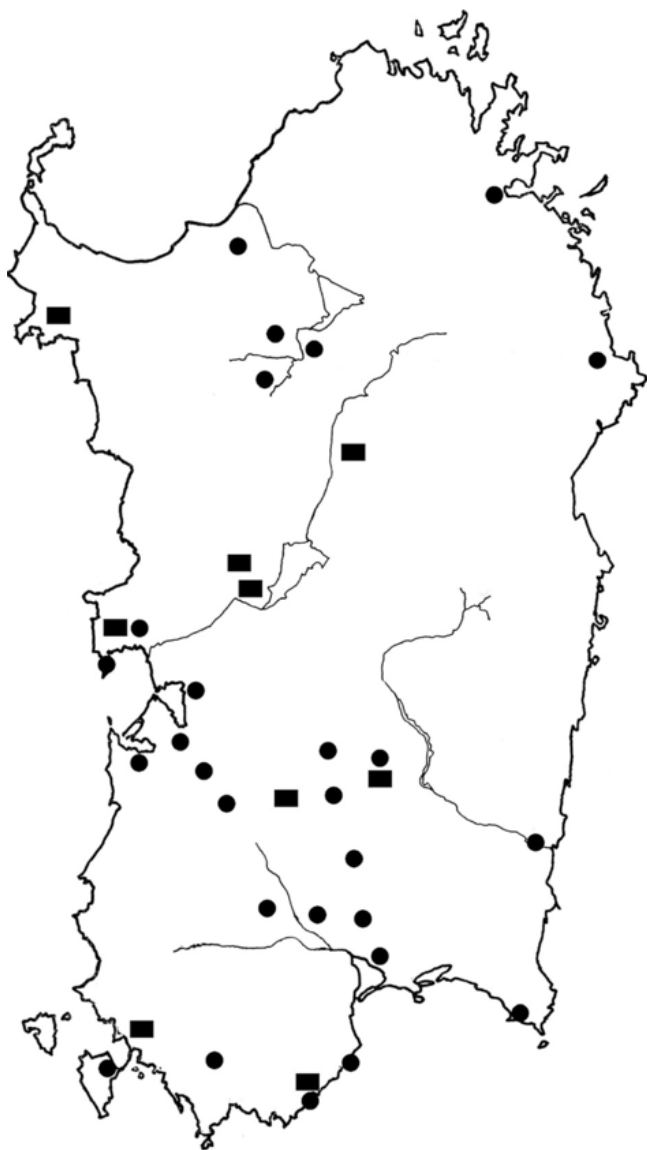


Figure 15.6. Distribution of imports: squares indicate Oriental bronzes, torch-holders, cauldrons, ninth–eighth centuries BC; dots indicate Etruscan and Greek pottery, seventh–sixth centuries BC.

While the bronze statuettes certainly convey military values, there is no clear evidence that communal

consumption of wine was ideologically valued (Tronchetti 2012a: 854). Unlike in Tyrrhenian Italy, there are no Greek-style 'banqueting sets' in Nuragic sites for either preparing or consuming wine in large quantities, nor have the small ceramic tripods been found that were commonly used in the Near East to crush spices for flavouring drinks. The one exception to this rule is a fragment from Corte Auda (Senorbi), but this comes from a late Nuragic context, where both Phoenician and Nuragic pottery was found alongside locally made vessels with obvious Phoenician features such as carinated cups coated in a red slip (Usai 2005). Similar varied assemblages are known elsewhere, too, for instance in the sanctuary at Su Monte (Sorradile: Santoni and Bacco 2008) and Nuraghe Sirai (Carbonia: Perra 2005). Wine was most likely produced and consumed in Nuragic Sardinia, but no specific vessels or places can be identified in indigenous contexts that have a meaningful and consistent association with wine consumption. Although chemical analysis has confirmed one askoid jug as having contained wine (Sanges 2006), askoid vessels are not consistently associated with other containers, and there is therefore no conclusive evidence that they were used to prepare or to consume alcohol. The same is true for imported objects such as bronze or gilded silver cups, sometimes in relief: they feature prominently in Tyrrhenian burial assemblages but are absent in Nuragic Sardinia. Their absence is unlikely to be due to different trade routes but may more plausibly be ascribed to the absence of a social need for such items among Nuragic communities, who evidently did not put on displays of exotic luxury goods.

As noted above, the few prestigious objects on record are all part of a communal context. The torch-holders, for instance, may have allowed communities to distinguish themselves from their neighbours, and the cauldrons probably played a role in communal meals at 'festivals' linked to religious, political or social events (Dietler 1999). They may also have featured on those occasions as gift exchanges between local chiefs and foreign 'guests' seeking access to sought-after goods. Not all cauldrons were imports, however, although most local products tend to show Aegean,

especially Cretan, elements.

A Nuragic bronze figurine from Monte Sirai illustrates very clearly the integration between the two communities in a sacred and convivial context. It was found near the Phoenician temple and shows a seated figure making a libation from a typically Nuragic askoid jug similar to those found in Etruria and on the Iberian peninsula (Figure 15.7: 5).



Figure 15.7. 1. Warrior from Padria; 2. warrior from Senorbì; 3. offerer with animal from Dolianova; 4. offerer

with loaf (?) from Ogliastro; 5. libation pourer from Monte Sirai (all by Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari).

The iconography of most bronze statuettes relates to the sphere of warrior skills and masculinity (Figure 15.7: 1–2). Between the eighth and sixth centuries BC, however, their iconography became increasingly associated with the sacred and ritual world, which suggests that life and livelihood became more valued (Tronchetti 1988: 35–37; 1991; 1997). In other words, whereas the dedication of a statuette was initially made with reference to warrior status and authority, later offerings combined armour with gestures of worship, and eventually all weaponry is replaced by offerings of bread, liquids or young animals, always in combination with gestures of prayer (Figure 15.7: 3–4).

Closely linked to the early mode of display are the exceptional Monte Prama statues (Tronchetti and van Dommelen 2005; Tronchetti 2012b). They stood guard over a burial site that consisted of 33 aligned pit burials covered by stone slabs, in which males, females and adolescents were buried in the fetal position. The burials were without grave goods, except for one which included a necklace of poorly preserved bronze fragments and a scarab seal. The latter is very similar to one found in Tyre in an eighth-century BC context (Stiglitz 2007). They were part of a long enclosure of upright stone slabs and more or less squared stones. The larger-than-life statues represent archers, warriors with shield and sword and boxers covering their head with a shield (Figure 15.8). They refer to rituals of some sort, as do the many *nuraghi* models found in the vicinity. The cemetery was also marked out by standing stones (*betili*), which had probably been removed from older Giants' Tombs in the same area, as they are the only objects not made out of local limestone.

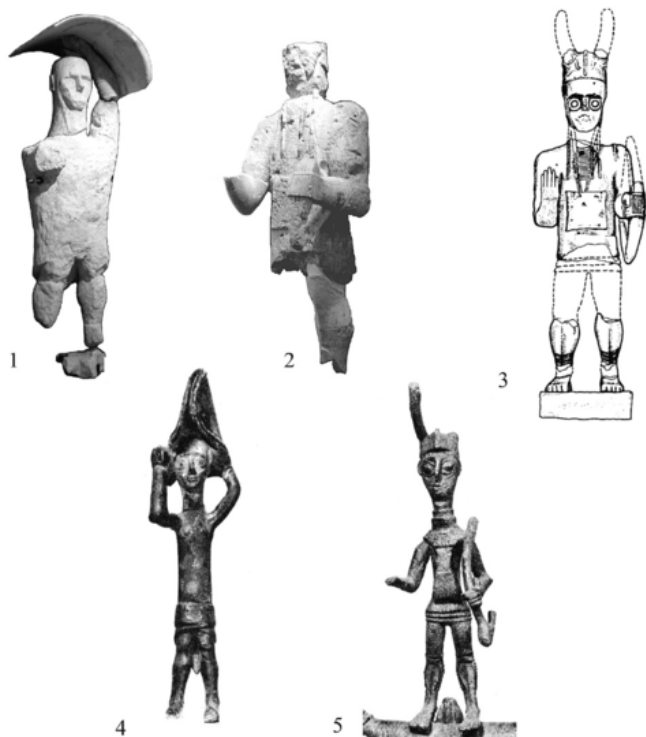


Figure 15.8. 1. Statue of the “Boxer who covers his head with a shield” from Monte Prama, Cabras (Tronchetti). 2. Statue of Archer from Monte Prama, Cabras (Tronchetti). 3. Graphic reconstruction of Archer from Monte Prama, Cabras (drawing Mitchell in Bernardini and Tronchetti 1990: fig. 204, revised by Tronchetti). 4. Bronze statuette of “Boxer who covers his head with a shield” from Dorgali (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari). 5. Bronze statuette of praying Archer from Abini, Teti (Soprintendenza Archeologica Cagliari).

The cemetery stands out for two reasons – first, because it represents the appropriation of the ideology of life-size funerary or honorary statues by the local Nuragic community. Because the iconography of the statues closely follows that of the much smaller bronze statuettes and is thus entirely indigenous, the implication is that the local Nuragic community actively engaged with the foreign settlers on the coast and were familiar with their Near

Eastern traditions, as was the case on the Italian peninsula (Colonna 2000b; Maggiani 2000). The second point is that even if the tombs are individual, they are understood and presented as a single entity that does not allow the identification of any one tomb as more important than the others. We unfortunately do not know how the statues were originally positioned because they were thrown over, smashed and dumped together some time after the late fourth century BC. At least 25 sculptures have been identified, but it is most likely that each grave was marked by a statue. The added presence of the standing stones, which are traditionally associated with communal Giants' Tombs, strongly suggest that it was the group, rather than the individuals, that was honoured.

The late eighth-century date of the cemetery and its statues places the complex in the early Orientalising period, which matches the ideological message it conveys. The site articulates the key aristocratic values of military prowess, religious piety and strong kinship connections, including links with (mythical) ancestors who are represented by the standing stones that refer to an older Giants' Tomb. The large numbers of boxer statues and *nuraghe* models suggest a ritual emphasis, which seems to be a characteristic feature of the Oristano and northern Campidano region, where quite a few of such objects have been found (Stiglitz 2007) (Figure 15.9).



Figure 15.9. Sinis in the eighth century BC (key: dot, settlement; square, shrine; crossed dot, votive deposit; arrow, burial; revised by Tronchetti from Stiglitz [2007](#)).

Defining Elites

We can thus identify the elements that qualify the emerging Nuragic aristocracy of the Iron Age: based on kinship but without a focus on individuals, and with a strong emphasis on military prowess and ritual devotion. They are in full control of the land and its resources, which they manage autonomously, and interact with foreigners who may be

interested in these resources. The local communities scrupulously selected foreign imports, and exotic valuables were limited to just a few bronze objects that could play a role in communal activity. These imports are accordingly found in sanctuaries located in strategic positions to control transit routes and large areas of the interior, e.g. Nurdòle (Orani: Madau 1997). This aristocracy did not attribute sociopolitical significance to communal consumption of wine in ways reminiscent of the Near Eastern symposium, but that does not mean that they were unfamiliar with wine, as it was probably produced in Sardinia and carried overseas in Phoenician-style vessels.

Small groups of Phoenicians resided among several coastal Nuragic communities, except in the case of the small independent settlement of Sulcis. It is quite possible that contact between Nuragic and Phoenician people, and the prestige the former may have derived from them, led to conflicts among the indigenous communities, as several late Nuragic sites in the Oristano area were violently destroyed in the early decades of the seventh century BC (Sebis 2007).

In the end, the close contacts between Nuragic and Phoenician communities during the seventh century BC led in at least some of the 'Middle Ground' areas to the creation of a new society which can no longer be defined as either Nuragic or Phoenician. Current evidence remains limited, but ongoing research has begun to revise the conventional view of a great wave of Phoenician colonisation in Sardinia between the eighth and seventh centuries BC. It is now becoming clear that only by the end of the seventh century BC did the Phoenician presence become more intensive, as new settlements were founded between the last decades of the seventh and the first of the sixth century BC. Bithia, for instance, situated on the south coast, is one of the better-documented cases, where the cemeteries have shown that it was not exclusively inhabited by Phoenicians, as some funerary rites were typically indigenous (Bartoloni *et al.* 1996). A substantial number of inhumation burials stand out among the Phoenician cremations, and significant items such as so-called Nuragic 'quivers' are found deposited on buried

bodies – these objects are actually double scabbards to hold a dagger on one side and three large pins on the other. It would thus appear that some Nuragic people were incorporated into Phoenician society with what seems a high social standing. Similar situations may be seen on either side of the Gulf of Oristano at both Othoca and Tharros, even if the old excavations of the latter site are cause for some uncertainty. The opposite is also the case, as areas that at first glance seem to be Nuragic have yielded objects that combine different technologies and iconographies. It has thus been argued that Nuraghe Sirai, close to the Phoenician settlement of Monte Sirai in the Sulcis area, was home to a ‘mixed community’ which is best labelled Sardinian (Perra 2005).

The cultural characteristics of this period are quite distinct from earlier ones. Even a cursory examination of the types of exotic goods and their distribution clearly shows the differences (Figure 15.6). If luxury goods were initially limited to a few metal objects in ritual contexts, by the seventh century BC substantial quantities of Etruscan and Greek pottery were circulating, most frequently in coastal settlements but, in time, also in inland Sardinia. The nature of the imported vessels changed, too, as they became geared towards banqueting, and Etruscan *bucchero* drinking vessels became a popular import. The various types of *kylikes*, *oinochoai*, *kantharoi*, Nikosthenic amphorae, Etrusco-Corinthian cups and plates came from different places and workshops in Etruria, while the *aryballoi* are of Etrusco-Corinthian, Corinthian and east Greek types. Equally abundant were east Greek cups, which date between the late seventh and the second half of the sixth century BC, but there are only two examples of Attic pottery that predate the second half of the sixth century, one of which probably arrived via Vulci (a Tyrrhenian amphora by the Timiades Painter). Metal objects, too, were imported from Etruria, as is demonstrated by several small bronze lions that decorated the rim of the *lebes* found at Su Monte (Sorradile) and Nurdòle (Orani: Santoni and Bacco 2008; Madau 1997). This overview, brief as it is, shows the variety of foreign imports in later Iron Age Sardinia.

Against this background, it is remarkable that there are no Etruscan wine amphorae in Sardinia, especially because they circulated in considerable numbers elsewhere in the western Mediterranean during the same period, for instance in southern France (Dietler 2005: figs 10–12). This is all the more striking, as Phoenician amphorae are common in both the immediate hinterland of the Phoenician coastal settlements and areas further inland. A parallel development is the disappearance of the so-called Zita amphorae in the second half of the sixth century BC: after 675 BC, Nuragic amphorae in Carthage declined from 38% to just 9% of all imported amphorae (Bechtold and Docter 2010).

Equally informative is the distribution of Etruscan and Greek pottery: they are common in the Phoenician coastal sites and occur habitually in both cemeteries and settlement areas. Further inland, they are also widely distributed over vast areas such as the large and fertile Campidano plains of Cagliari and Oristano. In these areas, local ceramic production is confined to the manufacture and use of traditional Nuragic coarse wares (*impasto*), but even these tend to be decorated with foreign designs, either incised or painted. New *figulina* wares of refined clays and foreign shapes are frequent and have effectively become an integral part of local ceramic traditions and Sardinian culture.

The emergence and distribution of these materials should not simply be seen in terms of ‘commercial contact’ between the Phoenicians of the coastal cities and the late Nuragic people of inland Sardinia, as I suggested years ago (Tronchetti 1988). These elements provide important clues to understanding how late Nuragic culture evolved in its relationships with the Phoenicians, and how together they gave rise to new cultural traditions, which I suggest we call Sardinian.

On account of these finds, it would appear that we are faced with a remarkable transformation of Nuragic society. The rapid increase of the numbers of people with access to exotic objects from a very low base provides not only a measure of these changes but also, may I suggest, signals the emergence of a new social class. A parallel line of arguments

follows from my iconographic analysis of the Nuragic bronze statuettes, which I have argued to show a change from military values to an emphasis on animals and crops (Tronchetti 1997). The starting point is the observation that the late seventh- and the sixth-century context makes it implausible that the latter statuettes simply represent poor shepherds or farmers. Rather, they imply that the dedicator owned or at least had access to land and cattle to bring such an offer. The statue of the *moschophoros* (calf-bearer) which Rhombos dedicated on the Athenian Acropolis is a famous example of precisely this phenomenon, which signals the social rank of the dedicator and the source of his wealth at the same time. It is therefore surely no coincidence that the large and fertile plains of the Campidano have yielded a remarkable selection of ‘exotic goods’ and ‘imitation’ wares. The latter materials imply the existence of a ‘lower class’ below the aristocracy proper, who tuned their lifestyle to the values of the latter. A good contemporary example is the site of Punto Chiarito on Ischia, where a sixth-century farmer/fisherman/craftsman modelled his lifestyle on an aristocratic model (De Caro and Gialanella 1998; Lombardo 1998). In Sardinia, the houses of this period are poorly documented but appear to be more often separated from the *nuraghi* that had previously constituted a powerful unifying element. The few well-documented houses were rectangular and built up in mud-bricks and thus notably different from the rounded shapes of the earlier courtyard houses (Ugas 1993: 39–42). Similar construction techniques defined Phoenician houses of both contemporary and earlier date, as is readily evident from finds at the Cronicario of Sulcis (Bernardini 2000b) and the sixth-century settlements of Cagliari and Pani Loriga (Chessa 1986; Botto *et al.* 2010).

What is striking is the lack of securely dated burials of the seventh to sixth century BC. Whilst extensive burial grounds are on record for all Phoenician coastal settlements, including Tharros, Othoca, Bithia and Monte Sirai, nothing is known from the interior regions of Sardinia. Burials reappear in the interior of Sardinia in the fifth century BC but are by then organised in large cemeteries and bear a strong Punic imprint. Poorly documented trench graves in

Sardara and Senorbi that yielded bronze statuettes but were explored in the early twentieth century may go some way to fill this chronological gap, but only a handful of these are known. This phenomenon is difficult to explain, and until other evidence becomes available, the assumption has to be that burial practices were adopted that left no identifiable archaeological remains.

We can gauge the presence of Nuragic communities within the Phoenician settlements through the quantities of local handmade domestic pottery. This has been convincingly related to indigenous women who married members of the foreign community, which led to the production and domestic use of a new type of 'hybrid' pottery that combined originally indigenous features with foreign techniques (Botto 2009: 359–60). A similar phenomenon was noted at the *tophet* of Sulci (Bartolini 1985a; Tronchetti 2005).

The imports consisted primarily of pottery, and pointed to a network of relationships that principally involved the large South Etrurian centres of Vulci, Tarquinia and Cerveteri. The latter appears to have been particularly well connected, as it has yielded a large amount of non-luxury Phoenician pottery (Rizzo 1991: 1181). Many Etruscan sites have yielded Phoenician pottery and often, but not always, Sardinian transport amphorae (Bartoloni 1985b); the latter have now also been identified in northern Etruria (Botto 2002). The virtual absence of Archaic Etruscan wine amphorae in Sardinia is therefore all the more remarkable and suggests complex interlocking networks of trade and exchange. There is, for instance, some evidence that Etruscans managed the transport of Etruscan wine themselves, while it may now seem plausible that it was the Phoenicians who frequented the Etruscan ports. It is possible that at least part of the Nuragic bronze boat models were brought to the Italian peninsula through this network.

These boat models are especially frequent in the Orientalising 'princely tombs' of Vetulonia, but smaller numbers have also been encountered in South Etruria and Latium; two exceptions have been found in south Italy, where one model has been encountered in the Hera Lacinia

sanctuary of Capo Colonna near Croton and another one in a burial at Monte Vetrano near Salerno (Spadea 1996; Cerchiai and Nava 2008–2009). They date to the eighth and the seventh centuries BC, as is also evident from a recent find at Su Monte (Sorradile: Santoni and Bacco 2008). The dedication of boats in sanctuaries dedicated to Hera in her role as guardian of navigation is not unusual, and I would suggest that the dedication of two Nuragic bronze boat models in Hera sanctuaries in Croton and Gravisca (near Tarquinia) may be interpreted as the work of Phoenician merchants from Sardinia.

My emphasis on Phoenician traders does not exclude that Etruscans played their part in these exchanges as well, as there is certainly evidence of an Etruscan presence in Sardinia. The absence of Etruscan wine amphorae is nevertheless significant, and, on balance, the evidence for direct Etruscan involvement in Sardinia seems limited. The only possible direct evidence is a famous ivory *tessera hospitalis* or ‘business card’ from Sant’Omobono in Rome in the shape of a lion that bears the Etruscan inscription *araz silqetenas spurianas*. Some scholars have interpreted this as an ex-voto from an Etruscan who had lived in Sulcis (*silqetenas*: Coarelli 1988: 148–50), but this is highly speculative, and I would favour Cristofani’s (1991: 73) interpretation that ascribes an Italic background to the text and its dedicator.

Conclusions

I have used the archaeological evidence to outline a picture of Iron Age Sardinia as framed by an ever-increasing Phoenician presence, which paradoxically confirms rather than detracts from the integration processes that I have discussed. The main differences we find between the coastal Phoenician sites (which are anyway mixed settlements with continuously changing numbers of ‘foreigners’) and Nuragic sites of the interior consist of different proportions of handmade and domestic Phoenician pottery. The coastal sites are usually strategically located for maritime traffic, but because they command little or no useful territory to

sustain their inhabitants, it is likely that growing numbers of inhabitants led to increasing demand and imports of agricultural produce, which in turn intensified interaction between the coastal towns and their wider hinterlands. This may be observed in most sites discussed such as *Nuraghe Sirai*, *Bithia*, *Othoca*, *Monte Sirai*, *San Sperate*, *Monastir*, *Settimo San Pietro*, *S'Uraki* (San Vero Milis) and so on.

By the end of the seventh century BC, a new element appeared on this scene in Olbia, where recent excavations have uncovered Archaic material that is without a match elsewhere on the rest of the island (D'Oriano and Oggiano 2005). Whilst Etruscan tableware is relatively common in Sardinia, and Greek imports, including some amphorae, are occasionally found across the island, the town of Olbia has yielded a number of Greek commercial amphorae, together with other finds that point to a Greek settlement. Unfortunately, none of it has been found in context, but the quality and distribution of the finds are such that even the absence of stratigraphic data and structures is not sufficient to dismiss the suggestion out of hand. Generally speaking, it is perfectly plausible that the area hosted a Phocaeen stopping-off point en route to Massalia, as Olbia is conveniently situated opposite the Tiber estuary and could have facilitated an alternative route to France that avoided the Etruscan coast. The subsequent establishment of a Phocaeen settlement further north on the Corsican east coast nicely matches Olbia. As Rome and Massalia already maintained closely relations in the Archaic period (Ampolo 1970), it would not be surprising that the Tiber estuary provided a convenient point of departure for a Phocaeen sea route. The disappearance of the Greek presence from Olbia around the end of the sixth century BC fits very well in the overall situation of the western Mediterranean around that time, when the battle of Alalia or the Sardinian Sea took place (Bernardini *et al.* 2000).

This episode is part of a much broader process of changes in the western Mediterranean. Carthage began to assert its power during the sixth century, first in Sicily and later also in Sardinia (Falsone 1995: 680; Bondì 1997; Braccesi and

Millino 2000: 13–14). The nature and consistency of the Punic operations on the island reported by literary sources remain disputed, but I would suggest they rather constituted isolated operations than a coherent plan that, as is alleged, featured two military campaigns. The first one would have been commanded by Malchus and ended in defeat, while the other one was led by Hamilcar and Hasdrubal, who managed to conquer the island (Bondi 1997: 70–72). The archaeological evidence is much more equivocal, as it is true that several Phoenician settlements were destroyed in the later sixth century BC; at the same time, however, there are at least as many sites, where no destruction evidence has been encountered at all, including after modern excavations. It is not far-fetched to see a strong Carthaginian interest in Sardinia, with its resources and situation, and which formed a stepping stone to the Etruscan coast, with whose cities Carthage had strong links. It is quite something else, however, to imagine a well-organised military campaign. An additional argument is that the so-called collapse of imports in the decades between 550–510 BC has been substantially qualified in recent years (Tronchetti 2010). As the Carthaginian presence in Sardinia became ever more established in the course of the sixth century BC both in commercial terms and as far as settlements are concerned, it is not inconceivable that Nuragic centres clashed with Carthaginian traders and perhaps settlers.

There can be no doubt, however, that something important happened in the later sixth century BC, as organised urban centres with an evident Carthaginian background were established on both the east and west coast of southern Sardinia (e.g. Cagliari, Nora and Neapolis). In the interior, such large settlements as Monte Luna (Senorbì) are of a later date and were part of the rural expansion of the fourth century BC (van Dommelen and Finocchi 2008). The profound and widespread changes in the funerary ritual to inhumation, often in underground tombs, are a strong indication of major new cultural influences.

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16 Myth into Art: Foreign Impulses and Local Responses in Archaic Cypriot Sanctuaries

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Abstract

Manifestations of culture contact in Cyprus (e.g., iconography, language, ritual behavior) during the Archaic period (ca. 750–475 BC) are still discussed primarily with reference to external sources and rarely in terms of their subsequent translation within a Cypriot context. In the case of Cypriot art, for example, iconographic studies continue to identify and trace the varying foreign traditions without fully acknowledging the potential for hybridization processes to produce novel forms and meaning. An examination of the complex religious iconography during this period reveals the productive capacity of cultural interactions, characterized by sculpted images that represent the recombination of existing cultural (and cultic) traditions among the diverse communities of ancient Cyprus and the broader Mediterranean region. In particular, this chapter focuses on a series of limestone images depicting a tri-corporate warrior, traditionally associated with the Greek Geryon, that appears in Cypriot sanctuaries during the Archaic period. While the reception of foreign symbols is apparent, a striking form of resistance also emerges. A more nuanced interpretive approach has the potential to counterbalance current interpretative models by bringing into focus the multivocal responses to contact and social difference, including acceptance versus resistance, innovation versus conservatism, and stasis versus change.

Introduction

In the spring of 1870, Luigi Palma di Cesnola – veteran of the Crimean and American Civil Wars, diplomat, antiquarian, and, ultimately, director of the Metropolitan Museum in New York – directed excavations at a *temenos* (sacred precinct) near the small chapel of Ayios Photios, 3.5 km southeast of the modern Cypriot village of Athienou, in the environs of ancient Golgoi (Cesnola 1878: 127–64; Masson 1971; 1983: 275–81; Counts 2011). Among the large cache of sculpted limestone monuments found in this area and in a deposit farther west, three early Hellenistic votive reliefs were discovered, all carved with cultic scenes and bearing inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabary (Cesnola 1878: 149–50; Karageorghis 2000: 256–57; Masson 1983: 284–87, nos. 264–66). A cursory glance at their style, narrative composition, and overall iconography immediately suggests that they are the product of a single workshop producing limestone votives for the sanctuary at Ayios Photios.

Based on the predominance of male divine and human iconography, the sanctuary can be associated with the cult of a male divinity (Counts 2008: 18–23). In fact, two of the three reliefs mentioned above bear inscriptions to the god Apollo (Masson 1983: 286–87, nos. 265–66; Karageorghis 1998: 186–88); it is the third relief that demands our attention (Figure 16.1). Here, an enthroned deity is flanked by two smaller figures to the left and right; although partially damaged, the figure to the right clearly bends his right arm to touch an object held in the left hand (a lyre?). Above the scene to the left, a horse-drawn chariot hovers as if gliding across the sky. The inscription, unlike those found on the companion reliefs, fails to make reference to a deity by name, preferring the simple invocation [wa]-na-xe (*wanax* – ‘lord’) (Masson 1983: 284). Taken with its two companion reliefs, which refer specifically to Apollo, scholars have generally accepted that the *wanax* mentioned in the inscription must refer to Apollo. The seated god, bearded and clothed in a short-sleeved *chiton* with a mantle draped over the shoulders, holds a tall scepter in the left hand while grasping a thunderbolt in the right – attributes

linked to the Greek Zeus rather than to his son Apollo. The relief has prompted discussion among scholars who are forced to reconcile the apparent incongruence between image, text, and context. Not surprisingly, a general consensus on the identification of the enthroned divinity has by no means been reached (e.g., Karageorghis [2000](#): 256; Hermany and Mertens 2014: 326–27).



Figure 16.1. Limestone votive relief from Golgoi (Cyprus), third century BC. H: 30 cm. Photo: Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York.

Apart from its obvious value as a reflection of ancient Cypriot cult practice, this relief illustrates rather clearly the predisposition of Cypriot artists to appropriate myriad divine images and assimilate them into a local, yet polyvalent religious tradition. In order to address this phenomenon directly and consider an appropriate approach, this chapter first discusses various methodological concerns related to Cypriote iconography, before turning to a series of limestone images depicting a tri-corporate warrior, traditionally associated with the Greek Geryon, that appears in Cypriot sanctuaries during the Archaic period (ca. 750–475 BC).

In particular, these images are examined through the lens of *hybridization*, a term increasingly used to describe the

process by which transcultural objects appear in the archaeological record of areas in the midst of cultural entanglements. Such processes have been well documented by Mediterranean archaeologists and art historians confronting material data sets resulting from various forms of cultural interaction (e.g., van Dommelen 1997; 2002; 2006; Webster 1997; 2001; Antonaccio 2003; 2005; Feldman 2006; Counts 2008). *Hybridity*, a term borrowed from the broader apparatus of modern cultural theory, refers to a particular state or set of circumstances, which produces novel forms that, while they may embody the mixing of disparate elements, reflect the merging of elements into a single, coherent, and context-specific entity.

Sculpted images and related attributes/iconography serve as ideal indices of hybrid processes, since they often allow recognition of external forces while necessarily requiring attention to local contexts and the potential for recording the spontaneous invention of hitherto unknown forms (Counts 2010: 34–36). The isolation of hybridization processes in art (which Feldman [2006] has succinctly coined *visual hybridization*) shifts the focus from origins and streams of influence to genesis and agency. Through a detailed examination of these images as reflections of multivocal responses to contact and social difference in Cyprus, I suggest a more nuanced approach that focuses on the transmission, translation, and reception of religious iconography and the productive capacity of cultural interactions.

Stasis versus Change in Cypriot Religion: Some Methodological Considerations

As noted above, the ambiguity that arises from the liberal borrowing, mixing, and reconstitution of divine representations characterizes the visual record of Cypriot religion during the Iron age (Caubet 1979; Sophocleous 1985; Hermary 1986; Karageorghis 1998; Counts 2008; 2010). As a result of this dynamic environment of cultural

exchange, the extent to which ancient Cypriots adopted foreign religious practice and iconography and the exact nature of such borrowings have remained central questions since the mid-nineteenth century, when the island's material culture first began to attract antiquarian and scholarly interest (Counts 2008: 15–18). Since that time, there have been two fundamental approaches to interpreting divine images dedicated in Cypriot sanctuaries.

The first assumes a wholesale transferal of both image and meaning from a foreign origin to the island, and therefore accepts (to varying degrees – explicitly or implicitly) the integration of imported cults and the worship of borrowed, foreign deities in Cypriot sanctuaries. The island and its sanctuaries are seen as relatively passive recipients of external contact resulting in the acquisition and acceptance of foreign cults and iconography. Such an approach was common among late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century antiquarians (e.g., Cesnola 1878: 105–106; Ohnefalsch-Richter 1893: 10–11, 129–30; Myres [1914: 127–29] provides a much more nuanced view of the relationship between local context and foreign iconography), but is not completely absent from narratives of the last several decades (e.g., Bennett 1980; Karageorghis 1998). Granted, these sources always acknowledge the complexity of Iron Age Cyprus (e.g., Ohnefalsch-Richter's [1893: v] elegant analogy of 'streams of civilizations' converging and mingling 'at full flood,' or Karageorghis's [1997: 221] important *caveat* regarding iconography and meaning). Nevertheless, the resulting narratives often privilege the cultural origins for a particular iconography rather than the local Cypriot response to this foreign influence. Thus, discussions often suggest the importation of 'cultic packages' that not only imply the acceptance of theonyms and iconography, but sometimes even religious ritual, meaning, and cultural affinities.

The second approach focuses on local contexts for divine iconography and related rituals, whether borrowed, adapted, or completely transformed, and generally questions any

direct correlation between the source of influence and its subsequent reception and translation within the context of Cypriot sanctuaries. Scholars such as Sophocleous (1985: 26–28), Hermary (1989: 295), Serwint (2002: 343–44), and the present author (Counts 2008) have all argued more directly for models that highlight indigenous religious practice and the creation of novel images – images that are able to define local deities, with their particular attributes and divine spheres of influence. Such approaches do not deny foreign influence; rather, the significance of local responses is more pronounced (most recently, see Counts and Iacovou 2013: 10–11). Moreover, these approaches often emphasize the conservative nature of Cypriot religion and its resistance to change, which suggests that external impulses are more likely to be recast within this local system as opposed to replacing or otherwise altering it.

From the outset, we must admit that both methods potentially may oversimplify the multidimensional and multidirectional nature of the various exchanges witnessed in ancient Cypriot material culture. On the one hand, there is no reason to doubt the aptitude of a Cypriot artist who has borrowed a foreign symbol or the patron who consumes it; on the other hand, we should not necessarily assume that original meanings and function remain intact with imported iconography. Rather than argue for the wholesale adoption of one model over the other, we are better served if we can find a methodological compromise. Such an approach should first take into account the multiplicity of factors that led to the presence of a particular attribute or image, locating it in a specific time and place to avoid the temptation to apply interpretations universally (a pitfall illuminated by many early studies, where deities are identified for early periods based on inscriptions from much later contexts). More importantly, such an approach should not simply consider the formal elements of iconography, but also the reception and the context of the subsequent translation of borrowed symbols for local consumption. By considering each of these three facets separately – that is, iconography, reception, and meaning – we might interpret more faithfully how any given image functioned within its particular context.

Art and Transmission

To illustrate how such an approach might work, we can turn to a series of sculptures in Archaic Cypriot art portraying a three-headed, armed warrior, who is most often connected to the tri-corporate Geryon, of Greek mythological fame (Myres 1914: 204–207; Karageorghis 1998: 56–63; Steinhart 2003). The story of Geryon occupies the tenth Labor of the Greek hero Herakles. The *testimonia* relating to Herakles's conflict with Geryon is remarkably uniform (Gantz 1993: 402–408; Shapiro 1994: 71–77). According to Hesiod (*Theogony* 287–92, 981–83), Stesichoros (West 1971; Page 1973; Curtis 2011; see also Brize 1980), and later writers (e.g., Apollodoros, *Bibliotheka* 2.5.10), Herakles must confront the monster at the far western edge of the world (mythical Erytheia, perhaps southern Spain), steal his prized red cattle, and return them to King Eurystheus of Tiryns. The labor was no easy task, since Geryon's cowherd, Eurytion, as well as the watchdog Orthros, also protected the cattle.

In Greek art, the myth was especially popular in the sixth century BC among representations of the many exploits of Herakles, who was himself a favorite in Archaic Greece (Schefold 1992: 122, 129; Gantz 1993: 402–403). The Geryon labor was among the most commonly depicted in Greek vase painting. The earliest representation in Greek art comes from a mid-seventh-century BC Protocorinthian pyxis now in the British Museum (Figure 16.2) (Smith 1884; Robertson 1969: 207; Brize 1988: 188; Cohen 1994: 696). Herakles is shown advancing to the right, drawing his bow against Geryon, who is represented as a three-headed warrior, with three shields, wielding a spear. Oddly, only four legs are represented. The subject appears on nearly 70 Attic black-figure vases (Robertson 1969: 208, n. 2), such as two mid-sixth-century examples; in both, Herakles has first confronted Geryon as an archer (see the discussion in Cohen 1994: 699–700).



Figure 16.2. Protocorinthian pyxis with Herakles and Geryon, mid-seventh century BC. British Museum, London. Drawing: Alberto Cova (after Smith 1884).

On a hydria attributed to Lydos (Schefold 1992: 123, fig. 142), considered the earliest representation of the Geryon fight in Attic black-figure vase painting (Cohen 1994: 700), the middle body falls back, struck by an arrow. On a Group E amphora (with Exekias's signature as potter), Herakles is in a similar attitude, and this time arrows have struck both the middle body and the slain Eurytion (Schefold 1992: 123–24, fig. 143). The story is also attested on numerous Attic red-figure vases, such as a cup by Euphronios in Munich (Schefold 1992: 126–28, figs 147 and 148). Herakles advances to the right, armed with his bow against Geryon. Orthros has already been killed by the arrow, while on the other side of the same cup, Geryon's cattle sit quietly. During the same period (i.e., sixth century BC), the myth was also represented in other media, and the iconography was often associated with cult places. Mid-sixth-century BC shield bands from the sanctuaries at Delphi (Brize 1985: 187) and Olympia (Schefold 1992: 122–23, fig. 141) focus on the close combat between Herakles and Geryon. Killerich (1988) has put forth the attractive suggestion that the famous three-headed 'Bluebeard' from the Old Temple of Athena (Heberdey 1919: 52–69) on the Acropolis in Athens represents Geryon.

Images of a three-headed, tri-corporate warrior first appear in Cyprus in the second half of the seventh century BC, as witnessed in two terracotta statuettes from Pyrga and Peyia. The better-preserved example from Pyrga (Figure 16.3) illustrates the basic iconography, which is common to both: the monster has three helmeted heads, each attached to its own torso and accompanied by shields presumably held by obscured left hands (Tatton-Brown 1979). Three right arms, which originally held spears, are raised in an attacking gesture. The Peyia figure differs slightly in the arrangement of the bodies, which are fixed one behind the other rather than side-by-side (Karageorghis 1989). Stylistically, both

statuettes probably date to the second half of the seventh century BC, as suggested by the large half-moon eyes, prominent noses, and pursed lips.



Figure 16.3. Fragmentary terracotta statuette of ‘Cypriote Geryon’ from Pyrga (Cyprus), ca. 650–600 BC. H: 24.1 cm. British Museum, London. Drawing: Alberto Cova.

The Cypriot fondness for the uncanny (e.g., the representations of the monstrous ‘Bes’ in Cyprus; Wilson 1975; see also Counts and Toumazou 2006) guaranteed the survival of this iconography, evidenced by three sixth-century BC limestone sculptures from ancient Golgoi. The largest and best preserved example (Figure 16.4) features three bodies arranged side-by-side, three pairs of arms, and six legs (Myres 1914: 205–207; Karageorghis 2000: 128–29; Hermary and Mertens 2014: 254). The heads are now missing, although Myres (1914: 205) notes a helmeted head

said to have been found near the statue. As on the terracotta examples, the positioning of the right arms indicates that they originally held spears in an attacking gesture. The figure wears a single short tunic decorated with man/lion battles in relief, and carries three shields. The shields, too, are decorated with devices in relief. On the right shield, an armed hero advances toward an excited, snaky-haired monster (Perseus and Medusa?) under the watchful eye of a heavily armed female (Athena?), and on the left a kneeling archer aims his weapon at a centaur, perhaps recalling the battle between Herakles and Nessos.



Figure 16.4. Limestone statue of 'Cypriote Geryon' from Golgoi (Cyprus), ca. 550–500 BC. H: 52.7 cm. Photo: Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York.

The significance of these scenes as reflecting inspiration

from Greek myth has recently been discussed by Steinhart (2003); if the reading of the devices is correct, the reference to Herakles, but also to Medusa (Chrysaor's mother and therefore Geryon's grandmother; Hesiod *Theogony* 287) are quite suitable. Until recently, the center shield had been universally misread as a depiction of Herakles carrying away one of the Kerkopes (e.g., Karageorghis 2000: 128), monkey-like creatures who tried unsuccessfully to carry off the hero's weapons, and thus understood as another scene taken from Greek myth. Nevertheless, Steinhart (2003: 50–51) has now convincingly shown that the scene depicts a slain soldier being carried off the battlefield by a comrade, recalling similar depictions in Greek art of Ajax with the body of Achilles (e.g., on the handles of François Vase in the Archaeological Museum of Florence). The statue is preserved to a height of 52.7 cm (although the missing upper torso, raised arms, and helmeted heads might suggest an original height of close to a meter) and dates to the second half of the sixth century BC.

Two other limestone statuettes are smaller in scale, but clearly exhibit the same iconographic formula (Figure 16.5) (Myres 1914: 207; Karageorghis 1998: 62–63, figs 25 and 26; Hermary and Mertens 2014: 254). Karageorghis (1998: 60) has dated them both to the early sixth century BC based on comparisons to the terracotta examples referred to above, although the facial features of the less complete statuette should perhaps place that example in the second half of that century. Both statuettes portray three-headed, three-bodied, six-legged warriors, armed with shields and raising their right arms attacking with a spear. Finally, mention must also be made of a remarkable late Archaic limestone relief slab that unequivocally makes reference to the Geryon labor (Figure 16.6) (Myres 1914: 234–35; Karageorghis 2000: 127–28; Hermary and Mertens 2014: 312–13). The slab, which originally had a red background that would have enhanced the viewing of the low relief, is divided into three registers. In the middle register, a badly damaged but clearly recognizable Herakles advances toward the dog in the upper register, who is already wounded by an arrow from the

hero's bow; Myres (1914: 234) sees the hero wielding a bow in the left hand, with the right held upward pulling the bow or holding a club. In the lower register, the herdsman Eurytion hastily drives the cattle away with a large uprooted tree, while at the same time threatening Herakles with a large cobble held in the right hand.

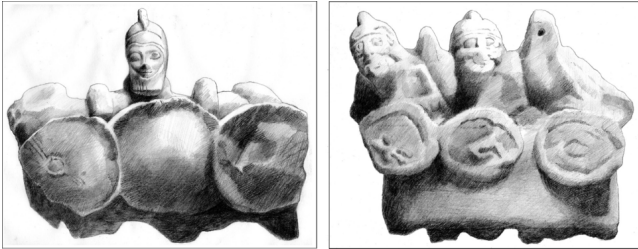


Figure 16.5. Limestone statuettes of 'Cypriote Geryon' from Golgoi (Cyprus). (a) H: 11.4 cm, ca. 600–550 BC; (b) H: 6.4 cm, ca. 550–500 BC. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Drawing: Alberto Cova.



Figure 16.6. Limestone relief slab of Herakles with the Cattle of Geryon, Eurytion, and Orthros from Golgoi (Cyprus), end of the sixth century BC. H: 52 cm. Photo: Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York.

The scene omits Geryon, but is still quite remarkable as an almost complete version of the myth. Hermary and Mertens

(2014: 312) date the relief to the beginning of the fifth century BC, although it may be earlier. Cesnola (1878: 135–37) prominently features the discovery of the relief in his description of excavations at Golgoi. In fact, he states (unambiguously) that the slab was sawn from a large pedestal into which the plinth of the larger triple-bodied warrior mentioned above (see [Figure 16.4](#)) ‘fitted exactly’ (Cesnola 1878: 137), an anecdote that neither Myres nor Karageorghis mention. If Cesnola’s assertion is true, taken as a whole, the monument would represent the only example in Cyprus of a fully developed illustration of the myth, with the statue of Geryon providing a narrative complement to the myth portrayed below on the face of the base.

Much like the Greek version of the myth, the Cypriot conception of this three-bodied warrior is fairly well established at its beginning and surprisingly consistent through time. Recurring attributes such as the multiplication of torsos (vs. a single torso), legs (vs. one set), and shields, as well as the aggressive pose with arms raised to attack with spears, provide an iconographic common ground across the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

Art and Translation

Having considered the iconographic evidence, we can now turn to the reception and subsequent incorporation of this sculptural type into a Cypriot context. Not surprisingly, there is no real consensus regarding the process through which this supernatural warrior appears in Archaic Cyprus, his origin, or even the extent to which local Cypriots identified with the myth in its original form. The debate features prominently the two schools of thought regarding foreign iconography and Cypriot religion highlighted above. On the one hand, Tatton-Brown (1979: 288) denies any direct connections to Greek mythology, arguing that ‘all the Cypriot examples probably represent a multicorporate warrior known to the Easterner although anonymous to us.’ On the other hand, while leaving open the question of identification for the two seventh-century BC terracottas, Karageorghis (1989: 96) argues that in the case of the sixth-

century BC examples, there is ‘no doubt concerning the identification with Geryon.’

Despite Tatton-Brown’s caution, it is difficult not to conclude that the Cypriot images were inspired or borrowed directly from Greek art and myth. The relative faithfulness of the Cypriot corpus of ‘Geryons,’ as well as their own internal consistency, suggest that the Cypriots received (though not necessarily maintained) relatively unfiltered elements of the Greek myth. The hesitancy in identifying Cypriot representations of this tri-corporal warrior as a direct reflection of the Geryon from Greek myth arises from the fact that, in Cyprus, he is always depicted in isolation, seemingly without any other direct reference to the story itself.

This raises an important question: if Geryon is represented outside of, or even divorced from, his typical narrative context, does he still convey the same symbolic meaning? According to the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, there is only one example of a stand-alone Geryon from early Greek art: a late seventh-century BC ivory relief dedicated at the Sanctuary of Hera on Samos (Brize 1985: 85; 1988: 187). Geryon is shown advancing right with spears raised, carrying three shields; while the figure has three helmeted heads, only one pair of legs is represented. The Heraion has also produced another significant piece of Geryon iconography: a roughly contemporary votive bronze breastplate, which offers an especially detailed composition of the Geryon myth (Figure 16.7) (Brize 1980; 1985; 1988: 187). Here, all of the key players are present. Herakles, who wears his familiar lion-skin as a headdress for the first time in Greek art (Cohen 1994: 696), is presented in his Homeric guise as an archer, with a quiver slung over his shoulder; Orthros, the guard dog, Eurytion, the herdsman, and the middle body of Geryon have already been struck by the hero’s arrows. Geryon advances forward, wielding spears, as Herakles stabs a second body with a sword.

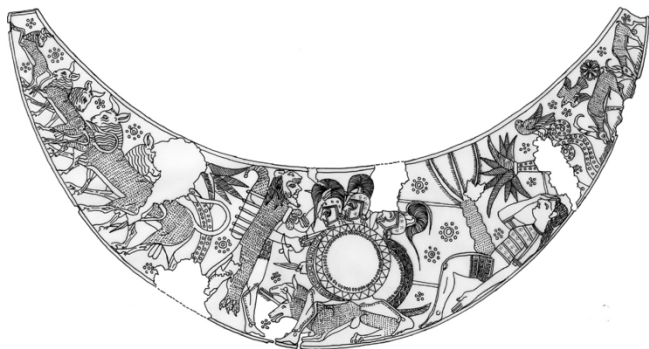


Figure 16.7. Votive bronze breastplate from the Heraion, Samos, ca. 625–600 BC. L: 88 cm. Vathy Museum B 2518. Drawing: Alberto Cova (after Brize [1985](#)).

Together with the Protocorinthian pyxis (see [Figure 16.2](#) above), these Geryon images from Samos are the earliest representations of the myth in Greek art. Given that the Heraion on Samos has produced two of the earliest examples, including the only example of a stand-alone Geryon from the Greek world, the island likely played a crucial role in the Cypriot acquisition of Geryon iconography in the seventh and sixth centuries BC. Based on the archaeological record, a network of exchange between Cyprus and the Samian Heraion was well established by the seventh century BC, if not earlier. Cypriot votives discovered at the sanctuary (whether imported from Cyprus or made locally by itinerant Cypriots) form the largest group of foreign objects in the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

For example, the catalogue of Cypriot sculptural finds by Schmidt ([1968](#)) records more than 1000 fragments in terracotta and limestone; according to Kyrieleis ([1989](#): 52), one-third of all the early terracottas discovered at the Heraion are identified as Cypriot imports. The fact that the earliest examples of Geryon in Cyprus appear in terracotta is perhaps expected. Cypriot coroplasts apparently had a special relationship with the sanctuary of Hera, and could have served as a conduit for the arrival of Geryon's iconography into Cyprus. Cypriot limestone sculptors, too, were likely providing sculpture for the Heraion. Samples

from 15 Archaic limestone statuettes of Cypriot type discovered at the Heraion and now in the Vathy Museum on Samos were matched to Cypriot limestone sources through Electron Paramagnetic Resonance spectroscopy (Kourou *et al.* 2002: 46–50, 60–71). Moreover, the Samians are the only Greeks specifically named by Herodotus (*Histories* 5.112) as part of the fleet that came to the aid of the Cypriots during the Ionian Revolt in 499 BC, suggesting that this close connection between Cyprus and Samos continued throughout the sixth century BC. Such close ties between the two islands, corroborated by both archaeological and literary evidence, provide compelling data to support the transference of Geryon's iconography from Samos to the workshops of Cypriot sculptors and, eventually, into Cypriot sanctuaries.

Art and Reception

Still, we are left with several uncomfortable, lingering questions. If the Geryon myth was known to Cypriots in the late seventh and sixth centuries BC, perhaps through direct contact with Samos, why did they seemingly disregard the other parts of the story? Did they simply prefer the three-bodied monster, or were they unable (due to the nature of the local limestone sources) or otherwise unwilling to render a fully developed, multi-figured narrative in the round? In order to consider these questions, I believe we must think more closely about the nature of Geryon's reception in Cyprus and the distribution of examples.

Little is known about the Pyrga figurine; it was apparently discovered at the site (located in south-central Cyprus) and later donated to the British Museum in 1866 (Tatton-Brown 1979: 281). Karageorghis (1989: 92) reports that the Peyia figure was found about one km south of the village, located in western Cyprus, in a *bothros* (pit with discarded sacred objects). This deposit also contained terracotta warriors, horse and rider figures, chariot groups, bulls with snakes, and at least one male figurine wearing a bull's mask – an assemblage indicating a sanctuary associated with a male god (Karageorghis 1989: 92). The remaining three examples

are from Golgoi, near modern Athienou. While the terracotta statuette from Peyia suggests an interest in the image by audiences farther west, this sculptural type seems especially connected to central Cyprus where the majority of examples are concentrated. In fact, Ohnefalsch-Richter (1893: 12) claims to have found ‘fragments of figures representing Geryon’ in a sanctuary to the northeast of Arsos, located roughly 8 km to the northeast of Athienou/Golgoi.

With respect to Golgoi, although there is admittedly some confusion regarding exact findspots (Masson 1983: 275–81), it is clear that the bulk of the sculptural material unearthed by Cesnola belongs to the sanctuary dedicated to a male god located in the vicinity of the town (Masson 1983: 277–80). Unfortunately, as is the case at other contemporary sanctuaries, the sixth-century BC epigraphic record is silent regarding the name of the male god worshipped at Golgoi. The remains of limestone sculptures displaying divine iconography, however, reveal how the Cypriots at Golgoi chose to represent their god during the sixth century BC, at precisely the same time when images of the triple-bodied warrior first appear in the sanctuary: as an archer wearing a lion-skin headdress and cloak (Sophocleous 1985: 28–33). The god is depicted draped in a lion-skin that covers both his head and shoulders, continuing down on either side of the torso to the legs; in one hand, he holds a bow, and in the other hand, arrows are visible.

The largest and most impressive example (Figure 16.8) preserves a portion of the bow extended along the left side, with the remains of the arrows held in the right hand visible in relief along the torso (Karageorghis 2000: 123–25; Hermary and Mertens 2014: 228–30). The scale of the statue – more than 2 m – makes it the largest divine image discovered at Golgoi, which may even suggest that it could have served as the principal cult image in the sanctuary during the sixth century BC. Two other sixth-century BC examples from Golgoi repeat the same formula (Sophocleous 1985: 30–31, pl. 5.2–3). In each example, the lion-skin is clearly visible, with the paws hanging over the shoulders. Likewise, the figure’s role as an archer is made clear. In

both, the bow is missing but can be reconstructed in the left hand, and traces of the arrows are visible in the right hand. In fact, due to the concentration of archer types found at Golgoi, Hermary (1990: 195) has suggested that the type originated in this region. Other examples are known from Idalion (Senff 1993: 63), Kazaphani (Karageorghis 1978: pl. 27), and Lefkoniko (Myres 1940–1945: pl. 14).



Figure 16.8. Limestone statue of lion-skin-clad archer ('Cypriote-Herakles') from Golgoi (Cyprus), ca. 530 BC. H:

217.2 cm. Photo: Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York.

Despite the obvious iconographic connections to the Greek Herakles, there is no evidence to suggest that the Cypriots had adopted the foreign hero as their own, much less integrated him into their divine pantheon (Hermayr 1989: 299). As I have argued elsewhere (Counts 2008; 2010), we are more likely witnessing a hybridization process, whereby elements are fused to create a novel image, purposefully modified to meet the concerns of local worshippers and to depict a local Cypriot divinity. As such, the god's skill as an archer/hunter and the supernatural strength exhibited through his mastery over the lion that he wears as his trophy instill a notion of divine power over malevolent forces – even nature itself.

Still, from a purely iconographic point of view, the particular combination of the bow and arrow with the lion-skin headdress suggests a prototype taken from Greek representations of Herakles. As is evident from the numerous representations in Greek art, the bow is the key attribute of Herakles in his battle with Geryon. And it is this weapon that is most often emphasized by Greek artists beginning in the seventh century BC. Even on depictions where Herakles fights the monster with a sword in close combat, we see the dog Orthros, the herdsman Eurytion, a third of the Geryon, or some combination felled by the hero's arrows. This element is common in representations found on Atticvases (Schefold 1992: 121–29), but it is also emphasized in depictions found farther east. The votive breastplate from the Samian Heraion mentioned above (see Figure 16.7) shows Herakles in close combat with Geryon, yet one of Geryon's heads, as well as his cowherd and watchdog, have been hit by arrows. In Cyprus, the relief slab from Golgoi (see Figure 16.6) depicts Orthros struck by the hero's arrow. As Schefold (1992: 124) has observed, 'it is only in his role as archer that Herakles is really quite credible as conqueror of the Three Bodied Giant.' This notion is also implied in the fragments of Stesichoros's epic poem, *Geryoneis*, where the

poet recounts Herakles's decision to 'take on the mighty one stealthily' (Shapiro 1994: 71).

The Geryon labor is the most common, and explicitly Heraklean, myth appropriated and translated by Cypriot artists in the Archaic period. Based on the pervasive emphasis of Herakles's role as an *archer* in artistic representations of myth in Greek art, I believe that we cannot rule out a connection between the presence of a lone tri-corporate monster and the sculpted images of a lion-skin-clad, divine archer adapted from the guise of Herakles.

'Geryon' in Cypriot Sanctuaries

In order to pursue the complex relationship between foreign influence and local responses beyond simply the reception and use of the iconography, we need to consider more specifically how these images functioned in their original context: the open-air sanctuary. Too often analyses of archaeological remains from sanctuary contexts focus on the typology and dating of recovered artifacts, or the dimensions and layout of built remains. We approach the murky problem of how an ancient worshipper or visitor might have experienced a Cypriot sanctuary much less often, despite the fact that such considerations have the potential to locate images and responses more specifically in time and place, while also encouraging a more culturally relevant discussion of local practice.

Admittedly, our evidence is quite meager. No contemporary (or even later) literary accounts exist for Cyprus that might provide the sort of visitor's response for which we search. A wonderfully detailed fourth-century BC relief from Golgoi (Figure 16.9) (Karageorghis 2000: 221–22; Hermary and Mertens 2014: 320–21) provides a snapshot of various cult-related practices that presumably occurred in and around a typical open-air sanctuary. In the top register, a family group approaches the epiphany of the god (here identified as Apollo; Karageorghis 2000: 221) enthroned before an altar; at the bottom, men and women dance; and in the lower right corner, a banquet unfolds,

complete with drinks and music. Here, we see a wide range of participants, from family groups with children to adult males and females. The relief offers a unique portal to the sights, sounds, and surely smells that greeted ancient Cypriot worshippers when they visited a sanctuary. The presence of the divinity invokes the special relationship embedded in votive religion whereby worshippers communicate with the god through acts and dedications and, in turn, hope for reciprocity in the form of good fortune. Most significantly, one appreciates the experiential nature of the visit, emphasized by the active interplay between worshippers and the place of worship. This same dynamic is seemingly played out at the site of Ayia Irini, on the northern coast of Cyprus, where the Swedish Cyprus Expedition excavated more than 2000 terracotta statues *in situ* surrounding an altar (Winbladh 2003: 151–56). The statues – which surely served as votive proxies for worshippers hoping to appease the divinity who might then grant favors (Connelly 1989) – acquire a performative quality by their placement around the altar, reproducing the ritual practice of offering gifts to the god.



Figure 16.9. Limestone votive relief with cultic scene from Golgoi (Cyprus), fourth century BC. H: 31.8 cm. Photo: Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, New York.

While these Cypriot examples provide important clues to the experience of visitors at local sanctuaries, the Greek tragedian Euripides's *Ion* provides a remarkable account of a sightseeing trip to the Sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi taken by a chorus of slave girls from Athens who are visiting the sanctuary.

CHORUS:

So holy Athens is not the only place
Where the gods have pillared courtyards
And are honoured as guardians of the
streets.

Apollo's temple too has the twin pediments,
Like brows on a smiling face.

Look – look at this! The Lernian snake
Being killed by Heracles and his golden
falchion –
Do look, dear!

Yes, I see.
But who is this other next to him
Waving a flaming torch? Is it the man
Whose adventures we are told at weaving-
time,
The brave fighter Iolaus
Who went with Heracles to his labours,
And stayed with him to the bitter end?

Oh! And look here
At Bellerophon astride his winged horse
Killing the monster with three bodies
And fire belching from its nostrils!

I am looking eagerly on every side.
See, carved on the marble wall,
The Giants overcome by the Gods in battle!

Yes, we can see it from over here...
(Euripides, *Ion* 184–219)

This late fifth-century BC account is remarkable because of the rarity of detailed early references in Greek literature to known archaeological monuments, but also because the passage offers a unique perspective on how ancient Greeks viewed and responded to the barrage of images that surrounded them. The young servants of Creusa look with wide-eyed wonderment as the myths that they had only heard about while weaving were being played out in the sculptures of the building. In particular, the passage suggests a narrative structure embodied in their response to physical remains and the ability of visitors to ‘fill-in’ elements from their own experience. Marconi (2009: 4–5) has persuasively argued that the ancient Greeks had a ‘strong, emotional reaction’ to the images that surrounded them, partly because of the belief that such images had the ‘power to come alive.’ In particular, he cleverly interprets the miniature figures found on a black-figure cup in the Metropolitan Museum as ‘animated architectural decoration’; the figures have come to life, leaping down from the static, framed metopes and ‘capture[d] the attention of the viewer’ (Marconi 2009: 6–9).

Like Delphi, Golgoi was full of images. In the sixth century BC, the sanctuary was dominated by male votaries, placed by dedicants to serve as proxies and to ensure a constant dialogue with the divinity in a reciprocal relationship characteristic of votive religion. The open-air sanctuary would have provided an ideal narrative context for images displayed within the *temenos*, offering visitors the opportunity to envision acts of continuous devotion embodied in sculpted votaries, but also to recall stories they had heard from others or drawn from their own mythological past, or even to imagine a new heroic adventure for their god. The potential ambiguity of response is part of the image’s power so that worshippers are provided with an opportunity to accept, but also to innovate – an act of *mythopoesis*. In a region where cultural encounters and the influx of external elements remained constant, this form of negotiation – in a sense, a process of hybridization referred to above that simultaneously acknowledges newness while ensuring the preservation of

local belief systems – provided an important vehicle for the integration of foreign impulses (Malkin 2005: 253–54).

Conclusion: Myth into Art

In the midst of a sea of human votaries, the triple-bodied warriors would have stood out as actors from the unnatural and divine world of myth. The image of the monster alone personified the uncanny, in the tradition of other fantastical beasts such as the Gorgon or Bes and would have thus served a crucial role as an apotropaic epiphany to protect the sanctuary. Much like other ritual activities that were played out in the sanctuary – by both live actors, as well as through actors portrayed in art who conveyed a sense of repeated action and constant prayer – the stone images of the heroic, lion-skin-clad archer and the fantastical tri-corporate warrior may have also elicited narrative associations of epic battles, narratives, and iconography borrowed from afar but translated for the needs of a local audience (Carter [1987: 382–83] has considered similar narrative associations in the iconography of ‘demon’ and ‘hero’ masks from the Sanctuary of Ortheia at Sparta).

With the *temenos* as the stage and the actors fixed in stone, a great mythical contest between the tri-corporate warrior and the divine archer would have come to life for Cypriot patrons. On the one hand, prior knowledge of the Geryon cycle (gained via exchanges with Greeks) or some interpretation of that story into a Cypriot idiom could have supplied the necessary narrative elements for the visitor. On the other hand, such a narrative association could also have been accomplished by the juxtaposition of figures within the sanctuary; along these lines, the discovery of a kneeling archer may have provided yet another potential actor on Golgoi’s stage. The figure is usually identified as Herakles (Karageorghis 2000: 126–27; Hermary and Mertens 2014: 232–33; Myres 1914: 246–47 is more tenuous) on analogy with the east pediment of the Temple of Aphaia at Aegina and Herakles’s own association with archery (Cohen 1994). Finally, the specific connection between a lion-skin-clad archer, Geryon, and his cohort might have been even more

explicitly displayed in the sanctuary if the relief slab and statue discussed earlier do in fact belong together, as implied by Cesnola's account.

The reconfiguration of borrowed symbols witnessed in both the divine archer and Geryon types, as well as the fundamental battle of good versus evil that their juxtaposition invoked, represents the creation and display of new forms – forms that were presumably accompanied by new meanings specific to their local function. As a divine hero who has already declared his power and strength in battle through the defeated lion he wears as his trophy, the god of Golgoi challenged the menacing, three-headed monster. Through his potency and strength expressed in victory, he embodied masculine fertility and the control of nature, while simultaneously offering protection from malevolent forces and ensuring a degree of order in an otherwise mystifying cosmos. In doing so, he responded to the desire of local worshippers wishing to represent their god in a personal, locally relevant way.

And while it is possible that some visitors could have appreciated the stand-alone images of the tri-corporate warrior as a metonymic device for narrating the popular Geryon myth from Greece, the equally distinct archer, clothed in the guise of the master hunter, provided a divine hero to confront the beast. While the influence of Herakles's and Geryon's iconography and the associated mythological narratives in art seems undeniable, Cypriot religious conservatism demanded that these attributes translate into a local, Cypriot religious ideology. As a case study, this consideration of the relationship between foreign elements and local responses specifically in reference to Aegean and Cypriot contexts provides a useful model that can perhaps be applied to other regions (e.g., Etruria, specifically in the case of 'Geryon'; see Brize [1988](#): 187) confronted with similar cultural entanglements.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the editors for the invitation to contribute to this volume and for helpful comments that improved the manuscript. Michael Toumazou, Nick Kardulias, and Erin Averett read earlier drafts of the chapter and offered insightful suggestions. I am particularly indebted to Michael Toumazou for signaling the Herodotus reference to the Samian's role in defense of Cyprus during the Ionian Revolt.

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17 Mobility, Interaction and Power in the Iron Age Western Mediterranean

Jaime Vives-Ferrándiz Sánchez

Abstract

In this chapter, I explore the interactions that took place in the western Mediterranean between the Late Bronze Age and the sixth century BC. Taking examples from pottery production to foodways, and from exchanges to funerary practices in Phoenician, Greek and indigenous settlements, I show how different motivations, modes of interaction and people involved shaped the contact situations and led to different historical trajectories.

Introduction

Since prehistoric times, the Mediterranean Sea has been a place of contact, encounters and exchanges for the people inhabiting its shores. These relationships intensified from the Late Bronze Age, when a group of sailors and merchants of eastern and central Mediterranean origins in pursuit of metals, agricultural produce and other raw materials sought to establish trade relations with people living on the western Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. This phenomenon of interaction increased from the eighth century BC with the arrival of the first Phoenicians and Greeks shortly afterwards in the sixth century BC.

The foreign presence and sustained contacts over several centuries offer an excellent case study for comparing and

assessing interactions, entanglements and changes by looking at similarities and differences and long-term historical developments. In this chapter, it is my intention to explore the interactions that took place in the western Mediterranean, Iberia and north Africa and their Atlantic shores from the Late Bronze Age to the sixth century BC between different communities that are usually grouped together under the homogenising and external labels of indigenous, Phoenician and Greek (Figure 17.1). The level of analysis will move back and forth between the global and local levels, exploring, for example, the Phoenician trade diaspora, Mediterranean connections and the establishment of Greek settlements.

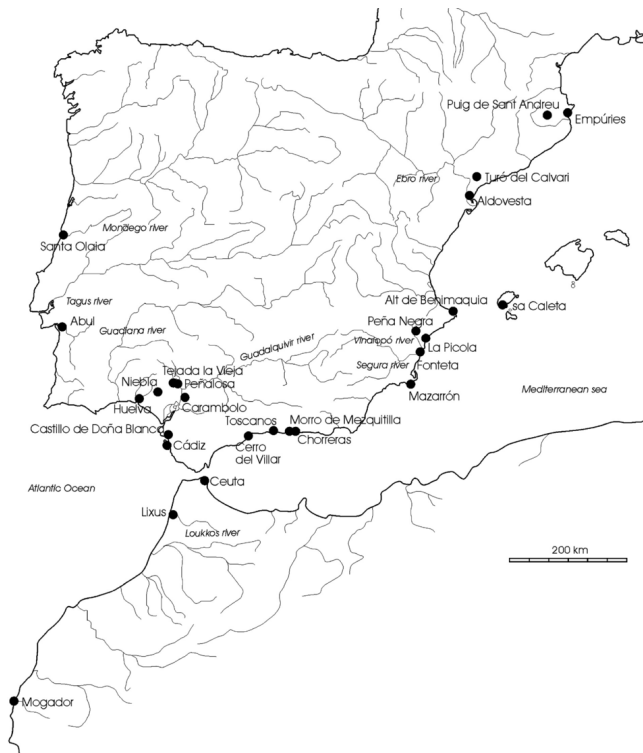


Figure 17.1. Map of Iberia and north Africa showing the main sites mentioned in the text (J. Vives-Ferrándiz).

Following recent theoretical insights, I will start by considering that these situations can no longer be

understood from approaches that subsume the contact to a single, universal colonial narrative, or that understand the encounter as an unproblematic inevitable relation of short-term contact, or that perpetually maintain binary oppositions between foreign and local, coloniser versus colonised. Rather, I will show how different motivations, modes of interaction and people involved lead to diverse historical trajectories.

Contact Situations, Materiality and Hybrid Practices

Contact situations stand out among the most studied historical issues in the ancient Mediterranean. Material culture of alien form and technique has been at the forefront of the debates for the archaeological identification of very different historical processes that fall under the umbrella of this metaphor, from colonisation to large-scale migrations or trade and from slavery to travel (Silliman 2005; Stein 2005).

This complexity is better analysed in terms of the materiality (Miller 2005) of the interactions and within local contexts. The key issue is to explore how different contact situations are inscribed in material culture and ‘how migrant worlds are created through the intersections of persons and things in motion’ (Rowlands 2010: 236). Material culture and related practices may account for ways of understanding the meanings of actions and the role of objects as culturally contingent constructions, in addition to representing values, symbolic communications and webs of social relations and power. In contact situations, changes in material culture feature prominently, for differences in material culture when people meet, contact or confront have especial archaeological visibility due to the fact that different traditions, *habitus* (sensu Bourdieu) and visions of the world meet.

In this chapter, I will discuss situations that have been traditionally labelled as colonial because a foreign presence – mainly Phoenicians and Phocaeans – was seen as aiming to settle people and to extract natural resources – including, for

some authors, the recruitment of slaves – under the appropriation of goods following asymmetric relationships and unequal exchanges (cf. González Wagner 2000: 87; Arruda 2009: 123; Aubet 2009: 293; *contra* Gómez Bellard 2000: 112). In this way, terms such as colonisation, the search for profit, unequal exchange and acculturation of indigenous groups have for decades been the key words describing these historical situations. Only recently have scholars begun to qualify these views and include perceptions, motivations, subjectivities, identities and diversity into the discussion framed by the power relations (Stein 2005). So, what require explanation beyond contact itself are the subsequent phenomena of continued and sustained interaction in the actual contexts of practices. They cannot be taken as a given because the situations were historically diverse.

If we understand these situations as contextual practices that involved people who ascribe value to things from their own perspectives and in relation to patterns of consumption that they consider to be ‘appropriate’, a nuanced picture emerges (Douglas and Isherwood 1979; Appadurai 1986: 31; Thomas 1991: 14; Dietler 1998: 300; 2007; Miller 2006: 347; Tilley 2006: 63; Knapp and van Dommelen 2010: 6). What I am advocating is to look at the variability of the situations created by processes of migration and mobility, such as the Phoenician trade diaspora or the foundation of Greek *emporía* and *apoikiai*, while not denying the power relations, domination and hegemonic actions; a picture in which there is not a permanent universal confrontation between two different entities (coloniser–colonised; foreign–native) but social heterogeneity that triggered alliances and connections, but also competition and violence. This approach derives, in part, from post-colonial theoretical approaches to archaeology that have challenged traditional colonialist epistemologies, namely the binary opposition between colonised and coloniser (van Dommelen 1997), while not neglecting the power relations that worked (Silliman 2005; Dietler 2010; van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012). This diversity will be interpreted in its local contexts, as the place for interaction, the establishment of regimes of

value, adhesion and conflict, but the array of shared practices emanating from wider networks – both indigenous and Mediterranean – is also crucial to this attempt (Dietler 2010: 11; also Hodos, this volume).

The degree of intensity of interaction (van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012: 24) is pertinent for this endeavour, and it has proven useful in specific case studies in the western Mediterranean (see Vives-Ferrándiz [2005] and [2008] for east Iberia; Dietler [2010] for Mediterranean France). This perspective allows for situations where the intensity of interaction is a salient feature and where it is better understood through the identification of hybrid practices that inform us about interaction among people of different cultural backgrounds (van Dommelen 2006: 139; Thomas 1991; Dietler 2010: 59 with more references). At the same time, there may also be contexts of limited contact between foreigners and indigenous people, where coexistence did not play a major part in the interaction. Because the power relations are of critical importance in contact situations, I will address this question for the various contexts considered in the final section of this chapter.

Movements of People and Economic Relationships: The Establishment of Overseas Settlements

Huelva, situated on the Atlantic shore of southwest Spain, has yielded the most comprehensive evidence in the western Mediterranean to date for understanding long-distance Mediterranean trade during the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages. Around the tenth to ninth century BC, the indigenous inhabitants of the low *cabezos* or hilltops overlooking the sea (Fernández Jurado 1988–1989; Ruiz Mata and Gómez Toscano 2008: 331 and 339) saw people of diverse origins and cultural background arriving from the central and eastern Mediterranean and settling in the coastal lowlands. The finds from this area include indigenous vessels together with pottery from the Levant, Cyprus, Greece, Nuragic Sardinia and the Italian peninsula (González de Canales *et al.*

2004; Ruiz-Gálvez, this volume).

Overall, four things must be highlighted. First, the mercantile flavour of this context is beyond doubt, as there are also writing implements and balance weights (Ruiz-Gálvez 2008: 39). Second, craftwork and metallurgical activities played an important role in these interactions, as is shown by remains of ivory working but also of copper, lead, silver and iron metallurgy. Third, the eastern origin of the people who settled in the lowlands near the marshes and coast is demonstrated by their cooking implements and culinary traditions (Delgado 2008: 169). And last, but not least, the material culture suggests that some local inhabitants and sailors actively participated in this long-distance trade from an early date (Guerrero 2008: 183; Bernardini 2010: 63), which matches the intense circulation of bronze metalwork during the Late Bronze Age in these areas.

The heterogeneous set of pottery discovered in Huelva has led some scholars to suggest that this is a typical context of open trade relations with the participation of middlemen and private enterprises of diverse Mediterranean traders. Some have concluded that these activities preceded the Phoenician trade (Ruiz Mata and Gómez Toscano 2008: 351; Ruiz-Gálvez 2008: 38; this volume), but other scholars claim that it was a truly Phoenician colonial expansion (Aubet 2009: 227–28). Instead of entering into this dispute, I would like to highlight the nature of the Huelva context, as this is not (yet) a situation in which newcomers established permanent and separate settlements on foreign territory on a large scale. Instead, this seems to me a situation of limited contact and coexistence, in which traders contacted indigenous groups and settled only in small numbers on foreign land. The following century surely witnessed the Phoenicians as the main players of interaction with local communities.

The Phoenician trade diaspora or expansion was basically a phenomenon of mobility related to economic moves (Aubet 2001). It started in the tenth to ninth century BC with commercial outposts and neighbourhoods in Cyprus

(Kouklia-Palaipaphos-Skales), Crete (Kommos) and Euboea (Lefkandi) and new settlements in the eastern Mediterranean (Kition in Cyprus, Auza in Libia, Botrys on the Levantine coast; Aubet 2009: 59 and 76–79). Sites in the central Mediterranean (Carthage; Niemeyer *et al.* 2007) and beyond the Strait of Gibraltar (Cádiz) followed later (Aubet 2009). By the seventh century BC, a dense network of settlements existed in the West that included the coasts of southern Spain (Aubet 2006: 94), Portugal (Arruda 1999–2000) and Morocco (Aranegui 2001: 3; López Pardo and Mederos Martín 2008: 19).

This phenomenon primarily resulted from economic objectives, and it aimed to establish trading relations through the exchange of goods – mainly metals such as silver – with manufactured goods and agricultural produce. Trade companies, retail middlemen and institutionalised trade of the palace and temple all took part actively in exchange activities throughout the Mediterranean (Aubet 2006: 96). The motivation of these enterprises came from both internal and external circumstances (Aubet 2001; 2009: 108). The active role of the Levantine ports as intermediaries for trade, their relations with Assur, a population surplus in the Levantine cities, and, above all, the increasing demand for metals as a form of payment lead Tyre, among other cities, to start this process of expansion towards new and unexploited sources of metals, silver in particular. A key source was located in the southwest of Iberia, in the Riotinto area of Huelva and western Sevilla (Aubet 2009: 286), while other areas such as Extremadura, the Tagus and Mondego estuaries in Portugal and northeast Iberia were explored much later and on a much smaller scale (Rodríguez Díaz 2009: 50; Arruda 2009: 126; Rafel *et al.* 2010). Other natural resources such as agrarian produce, salt and indeed human manpower (slaves) may also have been sought after, but we have hardly any evidence of them.

There is no doubt that Cádiz, or Gadir in Phoenician, played a key role in the diaspora enterprises in the West. Empowered traders might have operated from Gadir as the main Phoenician port in the Atlantic and the main channel

for bulk exports of silver to the East. The temple dedicated to Melqart would also have played a key role in the development of the Tyrian exchange relations in the West, as it represented the power of the palace and provided the setting for agreements and exchanges (see Aubet [2009: 281] for a survey of finds and textual references). The material remains of the early Phoenician settlement in Cádiz are unfortunately poorly known, even if several urban excavations in Cádiz have yielded domestic levels of the late ninth or early eighth century BC. The architecture is flimsy, and the pottery suggests diverse origins: there are Phoenician wheelmade domestic vessels such as plates, bowls, bottles and jugs, but also Sardinian Nuragic pottery (an *askoide* jug) and amphorae from the central Mediterranean (Carthage and Sardinia) as well as indigenous cooking pots and bowls (Córdoba and Ruiz Mata 2005).

Beyond this general framework, two points should be noted: first, the Phoenicians were not numerous – such is at least the suggestion from the size of the settlements that vary between 2 and 10 ha, and the cemeteries, which are always just small groups of burials (Aubet 2006: 96). Second, they were not a single and unified community. From their very foundation, the western settlements presented several cultural traits that distinguish them from those in the central and eastern Mediterranean, and cultural differences can also be detected between different areas of the western Mediterranean. It is also evident that the newcomers engaged in a variety of economic activities, ranging from trade to production and consumption (Gómez Bellard 2003; López Castro 2006: 82; Aubet 2009: 229–339). The cemeteries convincingly show this social heterogeneity through the wide array of funerary practices and ideologies that can be noted from Can Partit in Ibiza to Trayamar in Málaga. It is equally obvious from the evidence available that the indigenous groups were no less heterogeneous.

Returning to Huelva, the indigenous involvement in these activities is well documented at Cabezo de San Pedro and Cabezo de la Esperanza, as well as at other settlements further inland where a complex territorial organisation

existed to exploit the metallurgical resources with sites such as Aznalcóllar, San Bartolomé de Almonte or Niebla (Ruiz Mata and Gómez Toscano 2008: 331; Ruiz Mata and Fernández Jurado 1986; Rodríguez Díaz, this volume). Later on, during the eighth and seventh centuries, mining intensified, and a hierarchical structure developed in the indigenous landscape and the organisation of work, surely in response to the need for manpower. Indigenous sites such as Tejada la Vieja stand out as organisational centres of labour, with settlements such as Cerro Salomón dedicated to the exploitation of mining resources and others such as Peñalosa and San Bartolomé specialising in mineral processing (Fernández Jurado 1987; 1988–1989; García Sanz and Fernández Jurado 2000) (Figure 17.2).



Figure 17.2. Metallurgical furnace recovered in Huelva (Calle del Puerto 6) and hypothesis of reconstruction showing a clay dome-like structure and the position of nozzles (J. Fernández Jurado). Photograph: Servicio de Arqueología de la Excma. Diputación de Huelva.

Overall, the evidence shows that indigenous elites controlled the exploitation of minerals and channelled them towards the coast, where Huelva and Cádiz were the main ports. As at Huelva, relations with indigenous settlements existed from the very beginning of the Phoenician presence in the area of Cádiz. The settlement of Castillo de Doña Blanca (Ruiz Mata and Pérez 1995) is a key site to assess the

early Phoenician presence beyond the Strait and to understand its multiple connections and interactions with local inhabitants and later trade expansion into Tartessian territory. Castillo de Doña Blanca was an important port where items from the eastern Mediterranean, Sardinia, Iberia and north Africa were traded and channelled inland. While the domestic architecture is distinctively Phoenician, indigenous groups played a notable role in the site's daily life, as is shown by the amounts of local pottery in the earliest levels.

Contexts of Interaction: People and Practices

How local people interacted with the early colonies can be deduced from a small but representative number of contexts that may contribute to an understanding of complex connections and local conditions within the global framework of the Phoenician trade diaspora.

Handmade Pottery, Knowledge Transfer and Social Heterogeneity

Situated on the Atlantic shores of north Africa, Lixus has traditionally been regarded as a key site because Classical texts mention it as one of the oldest western Phoenician foundations. Pliny (19.63) even asserts that the Hercules temple in Lixus was older than the famous one in Cádiz, but none of these claims has ever been documented archaeologically.

The site of Lixus occupies a hill overlooking the wide estuary of the Loukkos river. The first layers of occupation consist of midden deposits dated to the mid-eighth century BC or slightly later. After a first period without permanent constructions, the settlement of Lixus began to develop in the late eighth century or early seventh century BC, when massive terraced constructions were built on the upper part of the hill, and the southern slope saw houses and craft activities (Aranegui [2001](#); [2005](#); Aranegui and Hassini

2010).

A key problem for understanding the Moroccan situation is that we lack information about the indigenous inhabitants encountered by the newcomers. Pottery from the earliest levels nevertheless gives us some clues to the practices and *habitus* of the members of the earliest community at Lixus. In brief, handmade and wheelmade pottery of both indigenous and western Phoenician types has been identified in the early levels, and it is the former group that is most informative. As at other Phoenician sites, the handmade pottery is far from homogeneous, and three main groups have been identified: coarse ware, which mostly includes cooking pots, pans and casseroles; burnished pottery; and incised decorated pottery, mostly bowls, plates and cups. Close parallels for this pottery can be found in sites in both north Africa and southern Spain that suggest relations and connections between western areas (López Pardo and Suárez Padilla 2002: 120–22; Vives-Ferrándiz *et al.* 2010). It has also been suggested that these connections must be explained in terms of exchange, such as, for instance, the western incised pottery found at Carthage (Mansel 2000: 171). It seems to me that the handmade pottery demonstrates most of all that the earliest inhabitants of Lixus were well connected and that the Strait of Gibraltar saw a great deal of mobility and interaction (Figure 17.3).

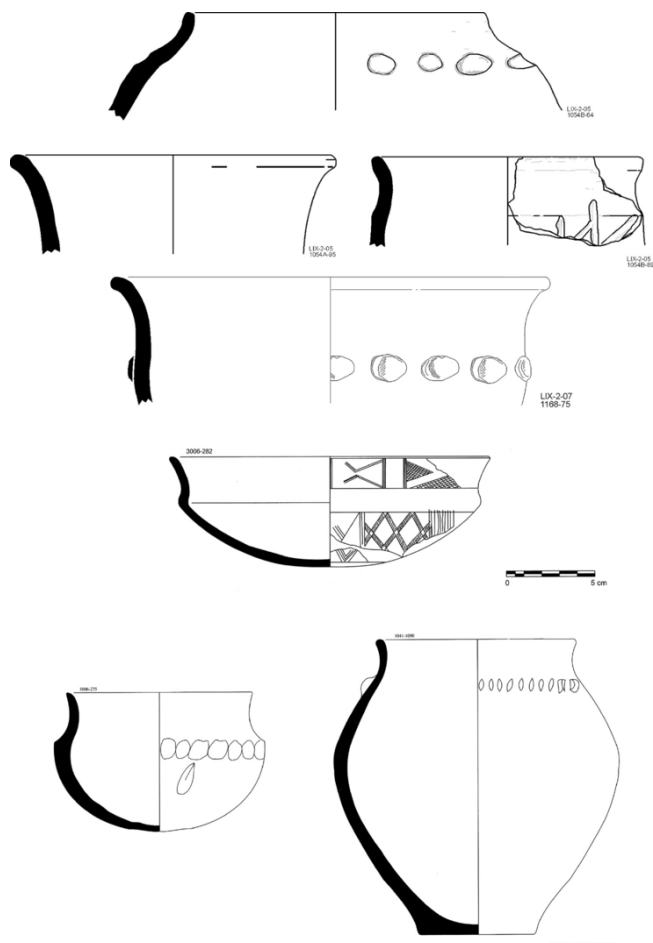


Figure 17.3. Handmade pottery from the earliest levels of Lixus: cooking pots, casseroles, pans and bowl. The bowl with incised decoration has close parallels to pottery from Western Andalusia (adapted from Aranegui 2001 and Aranegui and Hassini 2010).

Other pottery types from the same layers do not fit the conventional binary classification of (Phoenician) wheelmade versus (indigenous) handmade vessels. There is a considerable degree of technological and typological convergence, such as new objects made with well-established techniques or traditional surface treatments applied to new shapes, which implies various degrees of

technological knowledge transfer. The best examples are a group of handmade open forms (plates and bowls) with red slip burnished surfaces, which is a treatment usually found in wheelmade pottery (Vives-Ferrándiz *et al.* 2010: 93). Other instances include handmade versions of shapes usually made with a potter's wheel and, conversely, wheelmade vessels of a type usually made by hand.

Unlike wheelmade pottery, the handmade ceramics are produced in the domestic sphere by part-time specialists (Martín Ruiz 1995–1996). This is particularly interesting, as they are culturally embedded in a group's *habitus* and attached to particular norms and codes of households or other social groups, whose actions and choices they embody. As the conservatism of technological practice tends to slow down or inhibit innovation, variations in forms and techniques thus have to be explained. In our case, there is little reason to see these innovations as a top-down imitation of prestigious models, and they are instead better understood in terms of technical knowledge and local practices of the people that produced the pottery.

Making pottery is not an easy task, as it requires the teaching of knowledge and motor skills which have to be acquired through shared practices, dispositions and technological traditions. It also entails mastering materials, techniques, symbols, taboos and meanings (Crown 2001: 456; Loney 2007: 186). According to van der Leeuw (1994: 312), the nature and origin of variations and innovations in pottery production lie in sequences of conscious choices and actions within the framework of tradition, and it is these sequences that determine the features that are likely to change within specific traditions of pottery production.

Typological and, most of all, technological convergences and borrowings connect people's practices and traditions on a daily basis. In so far as technical systems are embedded in relationships and social processes, technology can be seen as a mediator between objects and society (Dietler and Herbich 1994: 205). In these situations, 'the effect of the practice of mixed origins' (Friedman, quoted by van Dommelen 2006: 139) has its origins in contexts, objects and practices that

refer to different ways of doing things. Far from just being mixed, hybrid or ‘fusion objects’ or reduced to elastic metaphors such as borrowings, fusion, melting pot, hybridisation, creolisation or translation (Burke 2010: 89) that have been widely used to describe the mixture of things, traits and shapes detected in material culture (van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012: 28), the key issue is that they point to technical knowledge and practices that are rooted in different traditions of pottery production. This pattern cannot be interpreted otherwise than stemming from a context of social heterogeneity, in which intense interaction, co-presence, alliances and probably intermarriage shaped the initial occupation of Lixus. Consider, for example, the extent to which Phoenician sailors would have required the participation and experience of local sailors to navigate the Atlantic Ocean, which is quite unlike the Mediterranean in its physical constraints, currents and winds (Aranegui *et al.* 2011: 318).

Daily Entanglements and Culinary Interactions

In order to explore encounters in the domestic sphere, I turn to houses in Phoenician settlements that provide clues for a nuanced understanding of the daily lives of their inhabitants, and whose identities were shaped through mundane materials such as cooking tools. It has been argued that the daily preparation of food in Phoenician settlements and trading enclaves of the western Mediterranean was based on Levantine practices (Delgado 2008: 168). But these, too, were transformed by the processes of mobility and interaction with other communities, especially with indigenous groups.

In every Phoenician settlement, from La Fonteta to Lixus, pottery attributed to local communities has been recorded in association with Phoenician materials. Evidence for the identification of indigenous inhabitants of the colonies is increasingly compelling, and moreover suggests that they did not live in separate enclaves but were co-resident in domestic contexts (Martín Ruiz 1995–1996).

One case study comes from the settlement of Cerro del Villar, a small island at the mouth of the Guadalhorce River, where the Phoenicians first settled around the second half of the eighth century BC (Aubet *et al.* 1999). At that time, indigenous communities occupied the mountains further inland and lived in the tributary valleys of the Guadalhorce river (Figure 17.4). In this particular instance, the Phoenician economic strategy was to trade with western Mediterranean communities of the Strait and with local indigenous groups. For more than a century at least, they relied on external sources for agricultural produce, presumably local indigenous communities, as the fertile land along the river remained largely unoccupied until the end of the seventh and beginning of the sixth centuries BC (Aubet and Delgado 2003: 70).

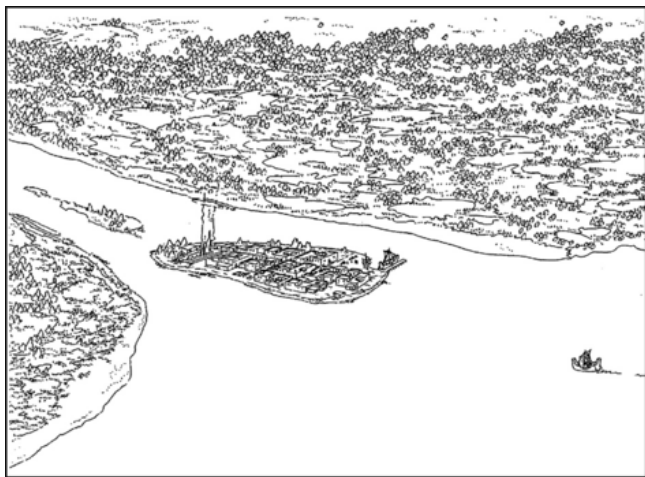


Figure 17.4. Reconstruction of the ancient landscape around the settlement of Cerro del Villar. Drawing F. Riart (courtesy M. E. Aubet).

Cereals and legumes were the staple foods in the early Phoenician settlements, as bioarchaeological analysis has shown (Iborra *et al.* 2003: 49; Buxó 2009: 162), and the pottery used for cooking them presented formal and technical features that refer to indigenous ways of cooking and have been argued to be consistent with ‘indigenous traditions’ (Delgado 2008: 171). Handmade cooking pots are

a prominent feature of the material assemblages of sites such as Cerro del Villar, Castillo de Doña Blanca, Chorreras, Lixus, Sa Caleta and La Fonteta. Liquid foods such as stews and porridges prepared in this culinary tradition are very different from other ways of preparing cereals such as baking, which has been documented at Huelva and Morro de Mezquitilla in the form of pottery discs to cook the dough directly over hot ashes. Domestic clay ovens appear in only a few households or open spaces in Phoenician sites of the Iberian peninsula and Ibiza, and have also been related to oriental ways of cooking cereals (Delgado 2008: 168).

In these cases, hybridity can be identified in the domestic sphere of the settlements: while objects and structures such as buildings, clay ovens, and trading tools such as lead weights found at Cerro del Villar (Aubert 2006: 100) point to distinctly Phoenician ways of doing things, other practices refer to indigenous traditions and *habitus*. Whether this is a case of indigenous women that married Phoenician men or the other way round is not the point, as I wish to emphasise the array of socio-economic alliances, relations and connections between Phoenician and indigenous inhabitants. I am primarily interested in the way that intense co-presence and contact between Phoenician and indigenous people modelled the situation and the materiality of daily lives over the course of several decades. In other words, material culture highlights connections between indigenous groups and the new settlements that may be labelled as hybrid practices of people of different backgrounds (van Dommelen 2006: 139; van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012).

Southeast Iberia has yielded evidence of several instances of intense cultural interaction between Phoenicians and indigenous groups, which all underline that the contact situations were not constituted by a binary opposition between the two groups. At La Fonteta in the Segura estuary, for instance, Phoenician settlers occupied a small strip of land by the sea around the mid-eighth century BC (Rouillard *et al.* 2007: 433; González Prats 2011). This must have been peripheral for local people, as indigenous Late Bronze Age settlements such as Peña Negra, Saladares and

Caramoro II were situated inland on the hills and along streams (Vives-Ferrándiz 2005: 244), and this choice of location thus speaks more about the newcomers' interest in settling close to the sea and connecting to Mediterranean overseas networks. The area soon became a place for exchanges and production, and by the first half of the seventh century BC, it had developed into an important port with new commercial facilities, storerooms, workshops and other productive spaces that transformed the layout of the settlement (Figure 17.5).

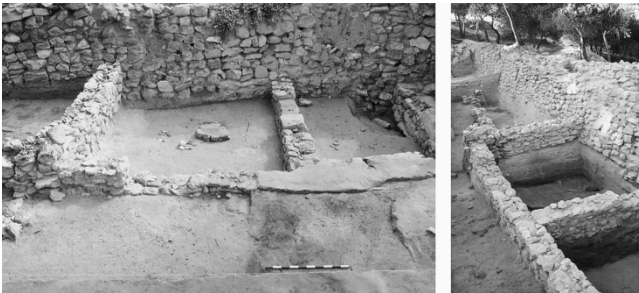


Figure 17.5. View of the excavations at La Fonteta, with the wall and the structures dated to the sixth century BC. Photograph: E. Gailledrat.

The fact that metallurgical activities have been recorded from the earliest levels of La Fonteta (González Prats 2005: 54; Renzi *et al.* 2009) suggests that the Phoenicians actively sought to become involved in local trading networks, and some of the earliest imports such as small ivory bracelets, necklaces and beads have indeed been found in Peña Negra and its cemetery, Les Moreres (González Prats 2002). Peña Negra had been a key site for the exploitation of mining resources during the Late Bronze Age and had already intensively participated in long-distance exchange networks (González Prats 1992). This evidence indicates that specialised activities became increasingly concentrated in particular sites during the Late Bronze Age and particularly with what we might call ‘empowered households’, as some groups in the local communities seized control of the exchange networks to increase power.

Contacts are not only attested by objects transferred along

the main valleys of the area, but also by direct connections and even close co-existence between indigenous and Phoenicians. La Fonteta has indeed been classified as an *emporion*, where indigenous and Phoenicians lived side by side (Rouillard *et al.* 2007: 433), while Peña Negra has also been described as a site where both groups lived together (González Prats 1983: 272). The intensity of contacts between the two groups is crucial in my view, as it is only in situations of close interaction that hybrid practices may be forged. The early phase of La Fonteta offers clear evidence of such links with indigenous settlements, as handmade cooking pots and bowls can be related typologically to ceramics from nearby indigenous settlements such as Peña Negra and Saladares.

Equally pertinent is the fact that connections were multi-directional: Phoenician tableware for daily use has been found in indigenous settlements from the time of first contact, and a Phoenician inscription on a locally produced plate from Peña Negra suggests that at least some people who knew how to read and write in Phoenician lived in indigenous sites (González Prats 1983). I have argued that the material culture of daily food preparation and consumption in Peña Negra attest this mobility, too, and that they shed light on culinary entanglements and the co-presence of people of different backgrounds. In the end, changes in the shape of local tableware might well reflect changes in cooking *habitus* and consumption practices that went hand in hand with the shaping of new social relations (Vives-Ferrándiz 2008).

The Expansion of Phoenician Networks: Interaction through Trade

From the second half of the seventh century BC, the Phoenician colonies of south Spain extended their exchange relations to new areas and intensified existing ones. As a result, Phoenician imports found their way into the inland valleys of Extremadura and Andalusia, up the Portuguese Atlantic coast north of the river Tajo, down the southern

Atlantic coast of Morocco and along the Mediterranean shores of Iberia. Throughout this century, the Phoenicians founded new small outposts along waterways, on islands or at key nodes of exchange such as Abul, Santa Olaia, Ibiza, Ceuta and Mogador (Arruda 1999–2000; Ramon 2007; López Pardo and Mederos Martín 2008: 155; Arruda 2009: 105; Marzoli and El Khayari 2009; Villada *et al.* 2010). These sites essentially served as a basis for contact with new lands and resources, and offered fertile ground for interacting with the indigenous communities. Along the lower course of the Guadalquivir valley, for instance, sites such as El Carambolo or Carmona (Belén 2009) and cemeteries such as Setefilla and La Joya (Huelva; Aubet 1975; Garrido and Orta 1978) show the intensity of contacts between traders and local communities and, above all, the integration of local leaders and the local economy into broader networks of regional or inter-regional exchanges (Aubet 2005: 118; Ruiz-Gálvez 2005: 252; Delgado 2010).

The prominence of the indigenous communities in these interactions is obvious from the material culture of these contexts. In Ceuta, for example, there was a small trading outpost during the seventh century BC that was initially made up of huts that were soon replaced by rectangular buildings (Villada *et al.* 2010). Local handmade pottery outnumbered wheelmade vessels of western Phoenician origin, which included both amphorae and food containers, pointing therefore to a trading enclave. In Sa Caleta, another trading post on the island of Ibiza (Figure 17.6), the picture is somewhat different because the handmade pottery, mostly cooking vessels, points to the northeast and southeast of the Iberian peninsula and the islands of Mallorca and Menorca (Ramon 2007: 112). It follows that the Phoenician enclaves maintained multiple and different connections, which should be examined on a case-by-case basis.



Figure 17.6. View of the houses at Sa Caleta, Ibiza.
Photograph: J. Ramon.

Other areas show very different scenarios that imply traders operating without Phoenician enclaves. These trade activities involved primarily agricultural produce such as wine and olive oil, and craftwork such as ivories and bronze vessels, that were exchanged against natural resources such as minerals and, probably, grain. Two shipwrecks at Mazarrón, off the coast of Murcia (Negueruela *et al.* 2000), represent the nature of these exchanges during the seventh century BC, as they carried amphorae and lead to be used for cupellation (Hunt 2005: 1244). Some scholars view this type of exchange as a typically colonial instance of unequal trade, in which demand was promoted by traders among indigenous elites in the periphery to obtain precious natural resources for the centre (see above). Such interpretations, however, tend to overemphasise the role of external agents and overlook the internal logic of indigenous groups, whose traditions, preferences and agendas may well require these imports, too (Dietler 2010: 26).

Not So Peripheral: The Appropriation of Imports

On the Mediterranean coast of Iberia, La Fonteta and Ibiza were the last Phoenician enclaves for anyone sailing north.

Beyond Cape de la Nao, up to the western Languedoc, the Phoenicians engaged in exchanges with local people only in indigenous sites or places of contact located on the coast or on waterways, looking for metals and other natural resources (Aubert 2009: 344). The local communities of these regions had exploited mineral resources since the Late Bronze Age, and metal had long circulated, as shown, for instance, by the hoard of bronze items and scrap from Sant Martí d'Empúries (Santos 2008: 53). Metallurgical activity nevertheless increased notably around the time of the Phoenician arrival, and recent isotope analysis suggests that local people exploited and traded galena and lead from El Priorat, in the lower Ebro valley, where El Calvari was a key site in this regard (Rafel *et al.* 2010: 183). They also produced bronze at a range of places in the Ebro valley, as may be inferred from accumulated scrap metal in sites such as Aldovesta (Mascort *et al.* 1991).

The items exchanged for the minerals were food containers such as amphorae (Asensio 2005: 557; Sanmartí 2004; 2009: 60), which are believed to have contained wine and, to a lesser extent, oil and fish products. Other objects such as mortars may also be associated with preparing and consuming food. Other imports such as Phoenician, Greek or Etruscan tableware are very rare in these regions, even if small numbers did arrive at some settlements.

Given the emphasis on wine and food, we should consider the social, political and economic role of feasting in small-scale societies (Dietler 1990; 2001), acknowledging that demand is always selective and specific (Appadurai 1986: 31). In northwestern Iberia, indigenous demand clearly centred on food and wine in particular because their possession, distribution or consumption brought certain advantages in the local context, as they made it possible to promote and manipulate relationships of power through gift-giving, hospitality and feasting (Dietler 1990: 362; 1998: 302; Dietler and Hayden 2001: 16). The value of Phoenician imports resided therefore not so much in their accumulation of up to 10 amphorae per site, as in gift-giving and consuming certain foods and wine (Sanmartí 2004: 18;

Vives-Ferrándiz 2005: 204).

It is worth noting that Phoenician wine was not the first alcoholic beverage consumed by indigenous groups in eastern Iberia. Indigenous groups had produced other alcoholic drinks, in particular some kind of grain-based beer-like brew, since at least the Late Bronze Age (Juan-Tresserras 1998), and drinking vessels of different types and quality have been documented along the eastern coast of Iberia (Vives-Ferrándiz 2008: 256). Pre-existing social practices associated with alcoholic beverages offer a reasonable explanation for the indigenous interest in Phoenician wine, as it matched indigenous sociopolitical conventions, including their social, economic and political use. The imports are therefore likely to have been selected and exchanged in accordance with particular local social, political and economic norms. The best argument is the fact that the new beverage was consumed in indigenous vessels and that there was no obvious wish to adopt Phoenician drinking or dinner sets (Vives-Ferrándiz 2005: 206).

Phoenician involvement in these contexts was thus limited to trade, and the nature of interaction was consequently different from that in contexts of sustained co-presence. Hybrid practices are therefore not the most appropriate label for these situations. Instead, commercial interaction and appropriation of imports by indigenous communities are terms that render the character of these contexts much better.

The expansion of Phoenician networks is pertinent to my discussion for two more reasons. First, the wine trade stimulated the economy of the Phoenician settlements through investments and the extraction of agrarian resources for export. This led, for instance, to an increased production and circulation of amphorae during the seventh and sixth centuries BC in western Andalusia, as is demonstrated by the pottery workshop at Cerro del Villar (Aubet *et al.* 1999) and the distribution of Phoenician amphorae from the Atlantic coast to Pithekoussai and Carthage in the central Mediterranean (Ramon 1995: 279). Second, the demand for wine also promoted local production at indigenous sites such

as l'Alt de Benimaquia (Alicante), where a local elite group set up their own production around the turn of the century. Locally produced amphorae of a Phoenician type were used to distribute the wine (Gómez Bellard *et al.* 1993).

Enter the Phocaeans: New Connections to the Northeast

Even if the Phoenicians were the main partners of Iberian communities during the early Iron Age, they were not alone: Greek sailors visited these shores, too. Herodotus (1.163–64) mentions the Phocaeans as the first Greeks to reach Iberia, but archaeology has confirmed that they only settled and established local relations in the northeast. According to later textual sources, the Phocaean presence dated back to the sixth century BC when Massalia founded a colony on the southern shores of the bay of Roses at an inlet that served as a natural port. The site was named Emporion (Strabo 3.4.8; Livy 34.9). The history of this place goes back much further, however, and is considerably more complex than suggested by this account. A low promontory overlooking the sea and the inlet was first occupied in the Late Bronze Age, and it developed into an outpost occupied by indigenous communities during the seventh and sixth centuries BC (Aquilué 1999; Santos 2008). Contacts of these indigenous groups with first Phoenician traders in search of natural resources (see above) and, at a later stage, with Greeks explain how this settlement combined local with overseas exchange networks.

Around the mid-sixth century BC, a small Massalian or Phocaean community settled at this site in support of the trading relationships that they had established with the wider region (Asensio 2005: 561). This promontory site is usually referred to as the *Palaià Polis* or 'old town', and is assumed to have been a trading post, albeit a very small one in comparison to Massalia and other contemporary Greek settlements in Italy (Dietler 2010: 108). Shortly afterwards, a new settlement was established on the mainland across the inlet, which was called *Neapolis* or 'new town'. The

conventional reason for this foundation is population growth, presumably boosted by migration from Massalia or Alalia, a Phocaeen settlement in Corsica that was destroyed around this time, and expanding economic activity in the port (Santos 2008: 58) (Figure 17.7).



Figure 17.7. Aerial view of Empúries. To the north, on the promontory overlooking the landscape, is the town of Sant Martí d'Empúries, ancient *Palaià Polis*. To the south, the new settlement or *Neapolis*. In between there was a now dried-up inlet that served as a natural port. Photograph: Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya-Empúries.

The transformation of the site from a trading post or *emporion*, where cultural and economic interactions between indigenous, Phoenician and Phocaeen inhabitants were limited, to a much larger new settlement with many more opportunities for interaction with the indigenous communities of the area is critical for understanding the role that the site would play in the region, even if, at 5 ha, it would remain much smaller than Massalia.

The Classical texts report that a large settlement of the local Indiketa people surrounded the colony. Although the Greeks were at least initially afraid of them, eventually the communities integrated and creolised. Archaeologically, two indigenous settlements are known in the vicinity of Emporion. One is the large fortified *oppidum* of Puig de Sant

Andreu that is usually seen as the ‘capital’ of the vast Indiketan territory, and the other one is the much smaller site of Illa d’en Reixac at only 500 m from Puig de Sant Andreu (Martín 1998). Despite the vicinity of these sites, there is so far little evidence for an indigenous presence in the Greek colony but ongoing research may change this view. The funerary practices recorded in the cemeteries of the early period of the colony, in fact, include both cremation and inhumation rituals, which suggests that people with different cultural backgrounds may have coexisted in the site (Santos 2008: 60).

Direct contacts between Greeks and indigenous people may also have occurred further south in La Picola (Alicante), not far from La Fonteta (Badie *et al.* 2000). This small site of fifth- and fourth-century date has been identified as the port of the main Iberian city of the area, Ilici (modern Elche), and it may have constituted a place for exchange for traders of different origins, including Greek and Punic ones. Greek influence has been claimed in particular for the architectural layout of the site, as its defensive system of a ditch and a low wall in front of the main walled enclosure have been argued to be comparable to constructions in Olbia in Provence (France), another Massalian colony (Bats 2004). Daily life in La Picola nevertheless appears to have been similar to that of Iberian *oppida*. A comparable situation may have existed at the nearby settlement of Illeta dels Banyets (Alicante), where economic activities and practices of Punic, Iberian and Greek cultural background have been recognised (Aranegui and Vives-Ferrándiz 2014).

Power and Inequality in Contact Situations: Elites, Ideologies and Violence

That indigenous agendas and internal logics operated in the processes of contact as much as Phoenician or Greek ones does not imply that power relations, domination and hegemony were absent from these contexts. I subscribe to the claim that colonial and contact situations are better

understood over the long term and as a function of power relationships between the groups involved, rather than as a binary asymmetrical relation between foreign and native (Dietler 1995: 95; 2010: 76; van Dommelen 1997: 306; Rowlands 1998: 328; Silliman 2005: 67; van Dommelen and Rowlands 2012: 24).

I have shown how domestic hybrid practices such as pottery production, cooking and food consumption operated on a daily basis because people were involved in close interaction in places such as Cerro del Villar, La Fonteta, Peña Negra, Lixus or Emporion. This neatly illustrates how mobility is embedded in materiality and how hybrid practices can shed light on the social fabric of these contexts. Whenever people from diverse origins engaged with each other, they involved people, objects and relations in their embodied practices ‘often by developing new hybrid practices in which old and new items as well as traditions can be accommodated’ (Knapp and van Dommelen 2010: 5).

Hybrid practices do not, however, imply symmetry in social relations. In all likelihood, social differences and inequalities existed, as the variability of daily practices suggests. It is also important to keep in mind that the Phoenician and Greek presence in Iberia was driven by economic motives, and that occupying land, military conquest and violence were not their primary intention, however unequal trading relations may have been – at least, this was not the case in the early period of the encounter. At the same time, neither does this mean that no situations were created that were dominated by foreigners ‘alien in culture, language, social group, or place of origin’ (Given 2004: 163).

Exchange in the Phoenician colonies revolved around public areas and buildings, such as the temple and the warehouse, where the economic processes of storage and redistribution of goods and products were administered and ritualised to the benefit and under the control of Phoenician elites (Aubet 2006: 106–107). The functions of warehouses and temples overlapped in the economic structure of ancient trade systems, just as trade agreements and political

alliances may have been sanctioned by these institutions, of which the temple of Melqart in Gadir was a prime example (Aubet 2006: 106; 2009: 279). Like Gadir, these places of exchange tended to be multicultural and often had long local histories of contact and entanglement (Belén 2009: 212; Delgado 2010). An emblematic case in point is the site of El Carambolo in Seville, where recently excavated buildings may have integrated both cult and economic activities (Fernández Flores and Rodríguez Azogue 2007; Belén 2009: 204). The massive restructuring and enlargement of the initial construction during the seventh and early sixth centuries BC illustrate the success of this system of cultural interaction.

Of similar seventh-century date is a massive building in Lixus called 'Temple A', where figurines and sherds with votive graffiti have been found. The evidence points to ritualised activities in a large public area, which could have been used for public food consumption but which also sanctioned power and hegemony by enabling an elite minority to control exchange and surpluses (Cañete and Vives-Ferrándiz 2011).

Storage in general implies that elites benefited from the exchanges. In Toscanos (Málaga), a tripartite storage building was created around the turn of the eighth century BC (Maas-Lindemann and Schubart 1982). The funerary evidence from cemeteries with rich chamber tombs and rare imports such as Egyptian alabaster vases like Trayamar suggests that a limited number of wealthy and powerful merchant families controlled the exchanges of the early colonies (López Castro 2006; Pellicer 2007; Aubet 2009: 337). These cemeteries also offer further insight into the ideology and identities of these elites: eating and drinking vessels used in funerary rituals in cemeteries of eastern Andalusia such as Trayamar, Puente de Noy and Laurita have been interpreted as a conscious construction of a distinctively western Phoenician identity (Delgado 2008: 179 and 182).

The transformation of all parties involved is a key feature of these contact situations. In eastern Iberia, for instance,

new consumption patterns were introduced in the wake of Phoenician trade. Associations of amphorae and mortars in contexts of the seventh century and first half of the sixth century BC indicate, for example, that soft substances were crushed for mixing with wine in order to aromatise or sweeten it (Vives-Ferrándiz 2005: 204). Mixing wine with other substances was common practice in antiquity, as it would have increased the flavour of the drink and may have protected it during long journeys. Similar associations of Greek and Etruscan mortars and amphorae have indeed been noted in the Languedoc (Curé 2010). Because mortars are rare and only occur in elite contexts (Vives-Ferrándiz 2008: 265), there may well have been more to this habit, and the addition of crushed substances to wine could also be evidence of segmented styles of consumption (Dietler 2001: 88).

Trading activities may thus have created, transformed, negotiated or maintained boundaries and identities, especially through the wine trade (Riva 2010: 223). They also stimulated the indigenous political economy and incited competition between local leaders, no doubt unleashing violent episodes as well (Sanmartí 2004: 19; Asensio 2005). Storage of Phoenician food and wine in particular is a prominent feature of indigenous sites in eastern Iberia, and it reflects increasing social differentiation and elite involvement in resource distribution. Conflict, violence and changing power relations can also be related to the intensification of trade and may explain the violent episodes at and even destruction of sites that stored Phoenician amphorae in the Ebro estuary further north (Vives-Ferrándiz 2008: 247 and 266).

It is therefore probably no coincidence that substantial defensive walls were built around most settlements that played a key role in exchange networks: this phenomenon can be traced from Castillo de Doña Blanca, Tejada la Vieja and Niebla in south Andalusia via Toscanos, Alarcón and La Fonteta to Puig de Sant Andreu in northeast Iberia (Moret 1996). Both the introduction of iron weapons and a new warrior ideology (Farnié and Quesada 2005; Vives-Ferrándiz

2008) and changing settlement patterns from the Guadalquivir valley to northeastern Iberia (Belén 2009; Aranegui and Vives-Ferrándiz 2006) occurred from around the sixth century BC and may similarly be regarded as consequences of the contexts of interaction that I have discussed in this chapter.

Conclusions

Movements of people, migration and trade diasporas entail interaction, transformations and consequences for all the parties involved. This is obvious in the present, and it was no different in the past. In this chapter, I have examined patterns of interaction and mobility in the western Mediterranean from Huelva to Emporion between the Late Bronze and Iron Ages, and I argue that the degrees of interaction and the local logic of actions are keys to a nuanced understanding of these situations. A theoretically informed approach to the relations between people and their material culture is crucial in this regard, as I insist that neither people nor objects act in isolation: people were involved in interactions mediated by things, and kept meeting, rejecting, accommodating, sharing, competing and triggering unrest with things in motion.

Acknowledging the different scales of these processes has helped my analysis substantially. Without denying the supra-regional trends of Phoenician and Greek mobility, I have focused on the practical decisions and actions of all the parties involved, both foreign and indigenous. I have done so in order to highlight relevant local practices of daily life such as knowledge transfer of pottery production techniques, regimes of value in domains ranging from metal exchange to wine trade, changing patterns of food consumption and the creation of new foodways and even the display of forms of violence, taking into account the social, cultural and economic transformations of all the actors involved. As a result, I would argue that the colonial paradigm itself is called into question because it is difficult to identify colonisation processes in such situations of mobility and it is difficult to draw clear boundaries between colonists and

colonised. Instead, I would wish to emphasise the multicultural and localised nature of the economic motives driving these migrations. That is not to say that newcomers integrated with local populations into a homogeneous culture but to acknowledge that episodes of sustained interaction and coexistence may lead to diverse historical trajectories.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the editors for inviting me to contribute to this book. Carmen Aranegui, Carlos Gómez Bellard and Mireia López-Bertran commented on an earlier draft, and their helpful comments have substantially improved this chapter.

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Materiality, Memory and Identity

Objects are literally the stuff that archaeology is made of and upon which this very book depends. And yet, perhaps because of its centrality and ubiquity, material culture has long gone relatively unnoticed and has certainly long remained under-researched in archaeology. While there has been extensive discussion about how the famously static material remains from the past relate to social dynamics, and even if ‘new archaeologists’ actually used the term ‘material culture’ (e.g. Binford 1962: 218), objects have long been regarded as a means to an end rather than worthy of investigation in and of themselves. To some extent, Clarke’s (1973) call for archaeology ‘to lose its innocence’ signalled a gradually emerging awareness of the nature and significance of objects. Around the same time, Deetz (1977) explicitly drew attention to what he aptly termed the *small things forgotten* (see also Hicks 2010: 41–49).

Nevertheless it was only in the 1980s, when the postprocessual paradigm erupted onto the archaeological scene, that these shifting and emerging interests added up to a radically new approach to material culture. Hicks (2010: 51–72) recently labelled this as the ‘material-cultural turn’ in archaeology and anthropology. Hodder’s (1982) *Symbols in Action* was an early and particularly influential book in a series of archaeological and ethnographic publications coming out of Cambridge and UCL in the later 1980s and throughout the 1990s that foregrounded material culture, both past and present. Hodder’s and other books vividly

demonstrated that objects did not merely or only passively reflect people's lives and actions. Instead they advocated persuasively the importance of studying objects in their own right and as part and parcel of people's life worlds. In a nutshell, the argument was that '[a]n adequate understanding of any social actions and relations ... demands an understanding of material culture and vice-versa' (Miller and Tilley 1996: 6).

The continued interest produced a steady stream of publications and innovative research, and eventually became established academically in 1996 with its own *Journal of Material Culture*, in which the editors made great play of the self-consciously 'un-disciplined' nature of the new field of material culture studies (Miller and Tilley 1996). The appearance of two massive material culture handbooks in the last decade confirmed that the field is not just here to stay but that it continues to thrive (Tilley *et al.* 2006; Hicks and Beaudry 2010).

Three decades of material culture studies have seen a plethora of approaches proposed with varyingly successful outcomes. The most prominent and enduring ones may be outlined as follows:

- *Objectification*: drawn from Hegel, this notion was first explicitly related to material culture by Miller (1987: 19–33), who proposed it to capture the relations between subject and object as mutually constituted and to overcome the conventional separation of the two (see also Tilley 2006). From this perspective, material culture is not a reflection or subset of culture or society but an integral and inseparable feature of them – as Tilley (2006: 61) phrased it: '[p]ersons and things in dynamic relation are constitutive of human culture in general, societies and communities in particular'. Objectification is thus a powerful and broad concept that has generally been used in combination with Bourdieu's (1977) 'theory of praxis' to consider the role and significance of objects in particular situations. This approach has done much to

bring out the implicit influence of material culture as part of people's *habitus* and routine actions, as Miller (1987: 85–108) sought to express with the term 'humility of things'.

- *Consumption*: the endeavour to understand how and why objects were exchanged and appropriated for use elsewhere or, on the contrary, rejected, has resulted in a distinct field of 'consumption studies' (Miller 1995; Dietler 2010). One prominent line of research takes its lead from Miller's notion of objectification and primarily explores (post)modern contexts to show how even identical mass-produced objects are appropriated and adapted by people to create their personal life worlds, best demonstrated by Miller's (e.g. 1988; 2009) own work in contemporary north London. Past consumption has become an equally significant topic of investigation to understand in more detail exchange networks and object distributions in colonial situations (e.g. Dietler 1998; van Wijngaarden 2002).
- *Object biographies*: building on an older line of anthropological research and resonating with Miller's emphasis on objectification, Appadurai's (1986) edited volume *The Social Life of Things*, including Kopytoff's (1986) seminal essay 'The cultural biography of things', galvanised an interest in the ways that people and objects related to each other. By exploring the shared histories, it proved possible to explore how object meaning and personal identity were mutually constitutive of each other. The 1999 *World Archaeology* issue on this topic (Gosden and Marshall 1999) demonstrated through a series of case studies how this concept may effectively be used to explore archaeological finds in historical and contextual terms (Hoskins 2006).
- *Built environment*: material culture also encompasses the built environment, which has long been understood to play a critical role in forging connections between people's identity and places (e.g. Kent 1993). As constructing buildings and places serves to develop and reproduce relationships between

people and the landscape in which they dwell, both the wider landscape and the houses and settlements therein have become fertile ground for exploring the role and significance of material culture in people's lives (Hirsch 1995; Ashmore and Knapp 1999).

Twenty years on from the heated debates and exciting proposals to explore material culture, these major themes have become more or less established as foundational perspectives in archaeology. That is not to say that debate has evaporated, far from it, as new fault lines and frontiers have opened. One of these concerns the notion of 'materiality' that has come to dominate recent work (e.g. Miller 2005); it too was called into question by Ingold (2007) who, in an inspiring essay, provocatively asked what had happened to the material aspects of material culture, urging archaeologists 'to take materials seriously' (Ingold 2007: 14). The various lines of enquiry are also increasingly being enmeshed, as is well demonstrated by Meskell's (2004) study of Egyptian 'material biographies' that she demonstrates to be as much part of ancient as of modern life worlds. In another recent contribution, Hodder (2012) has returned to the fray with the proposition that these biographies are not just material, but also and equally implicate humans.

Against the background of these fundamental theoretical debates, the chapters of this section pursue a variety of aspects of contemporary material culture debates. The richly textured arguments exemplify first of all that the Mediterranean is particularly well suited to discussion of such fundamental themes, as the region has a very rich archaeological heritage, and thanks to its long history of research, the material is both accessible and quite well understood at a basic level. Drawing on this rich database, these chapters abundantly demonstrate the fertile ground that the Mediterranean Bronze and Iron Ages constitute for theoretical investigation. More specifically, the chapters of this section delve into matters of identity and memory as created and reified in and through material culture in the

widest sense of the terms, ranging from Cretan ‘palaces’ to Anatolian rock carvings. Another recurrent point of interest is how ‘places are made’ and a ‘sense of place’ created (Feld and Basso 1996; Jones 2007). Several of the chapters also draw attention to art and explore it as a very special category of material culture rather than setting it aside from archaeological and anthropological research (Morphy 2010). Even though art was propelled into the material culture debate by Gell’s (1998) challenge to understand how art ‘works’ and acts upon people, which in some ways brought together research on biographies and agency (Hoskins 2006: 76–78), it has yet to become a feature of mainstream debates.

Together, the chapters of this section demonstrate how the long research traditions and rich databases of the Mediterranean enable innovative research.

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18 Sensuous Memory, Materiality and History: Rethinking the ‘Rise of the Palaces’ on Bronze Age Crete

Yannis Hamilakis

Abstract

The main thesis of this chapter is that sensuous, bodily memory and mnemonic history were fundamental in the constitution and materialisation of Bronze Age, or ‘Minoan’, Crete. By examining two contexts, the funerary arena of the Prepalatial period, and Palatial contexts at sites such as Knossos, Phaistos, Malia and Petras, it is argued that the interplay between remembering and forgetting, and the need to materialise ancestral, mnemonic links and associations, were responsible for many of the material and social practices witnessed by archaeologists. Furthermore, I maintain that remembering and forgetting – and the forging of mnemonic links – were played out in embodied ceremonies and rituals, in mortuary and other contexts, where commensality and drinking ceremonies in particular were central. The question of the ‘rise of the palaces’ is then revisited through this prism, and it is argued that a more fruitful explanation would be to see the phenomenon as the celebration, materialisation and glorification of indigenous, long-term history and memory, which took place in locales with a deep history, places that were special because of their ancestral, historical connotations, and their long-term association with rituals of commensality. Memory, however, has its own political economy, and this process of drawing on and materialising mnemonic links and associations was highly contested.

Introduction

An illustration in Renfrew's influential and still valuable *The Emergence of Civilisation* is most telling with regard to the approach I take in this chapter: a Piet de Jong artistic image (after Evans) of a Late 'Minoan bathroom' from Knossos (Renfrew 1972: fig. 21.3). This is in fact the very last image in the book, located in the concluding chapter that deals with the 'multiplier effect in action': the assumed impact of processes such as Mediterranean 'polyculture' (following the introduction of grapevine and olives) and 'redistribution' in bringing about 'civilisation', which Renfrew equates with the development of 'palaces' in Bronze Age Crete. The message conveyed by this image is that only civilised society constructs lavish, elaborate baths. This recalls the popular fascination with the perceived sophistication of the Minoan sewage system, evoked by countless tourist guides to Cretan sites to the present day, but also the nineteenth-century advertising slogan by the Unilever company declaring that 'soap is civilisation' (McClintock 2000: 207).

It is this popular and academic notion of a developed, European, 'civilised' society which achieved olfactory neutrality (much like an early modernist world that 'declared war on smells'; Bauman 1993: 24), and more broadly this modernist construction of a Bronze Age context, that I want to challenge here. Since its archaeological remake at the start of the twentieth century, this context has operated as the playground for all sorts of scholarly and popular fantasies: at times a peaceful 'paradise lost', a world of tolerance, sexual ambivalence and experimentation (e.g. papers in Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006, especially by Roessel); at other times and by other writers a highly organised 'state' society (or a proto-state, a segmentary state or a chiefdom, depending on the author), a 'first level state civilisation' with its clearly defined political-administrative territories and its hierarchical, multi-tier settlement pattern. We are thus left to choose between the western European escapist desire for a liberal, free-love utopia, and the neo-evolutionist fantasy and desire for order, hierarchy and administration. In this chapter, I attempt not so much to

produce but rather evoke an alternative history of Bronze Age Crete, a history from below, one that puts at its centre sensorial experience and mnemonic recollection. Political economy and the dialectics of power are present throughout, but this is a political economy produced in the arena of sensory experience and sensuous memory.

Sensory and sensuous archaeologies are not representations of the past but rather evocations of its materiality and its affective impact. Evocation is not an easy task, especially through the medium of a chapter such as this one. While what follows is still a scholarly and academic account, it is also, at least in part, an experiment in sensuous archaeology. At certain moments, especially in the first part of this chapter, I attempt to combine academic essay and storytelling, sacrificing neither the rigour of scholarship involved in the former nor the immediacy and the evocative power of the latter (Jackson 1998). This study is not an attempt to write a rigid, chronologically complete and bounded, total and totalising history of Bronze Age Crete. Rather, it is an experiment in narrating a series of vignettes, fragments of material and sensuous lifeworlds, hopefully retaining and conveying the texture and carnality of intersubjective and inter-corporeal experience. The chronological framework for this enquiry is broad, ranging from the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3100/3000 BC) to the end of the 'neopalatial' periods (ca. 1500/1450 BC). Two main contexts are examined here: mortuary, and 'palatial'.

The Smell of Death

If you come to my funeral, I will come to yours. (Yannis Varveris, *Savoir Mourir*)

Is there a more serious, more profound and more unsettling disruption of daily routine, of *habitus*, of temporality for a close-knit community than the death of a person? How does one deal with that disruption of temporality at the emotional, affective level? How does that rupture reorganise time, familial-social bonds and *habitus*? How does one deal

with the embodiment of death, with its sensuous and sensory impact? Indeed, when is a person *really dead*, since the physical presence of that person, long after stopping breathing and talking, continues to act upon others, in a haptic, olfactory, multi-sensory and inevitably affective manner, its flesh transformed into something else?

For the people of the third and early second millennium BC Crete (roughly 3100–1700 BC, Early Minoan [EM] I–Middle Minoan [MM] II; see [Table 18.1](#)), these matters were of fundamental importance. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that their communities were made and unmade in the arena of death. But we now know that these communities were regionally diverse, and their way of death and its aftermath were hardly singular and homogeneous (Legarra Herrero 2009). Take the people of the Mesara, for example, in the fertile, south-central part of the island, and the people living farther north, at Archanes, nearby Knossos ([Figure 18.1](#)). What did they do with their dead? It would be a misrepresentation to say that they buried them. That would imply distance, concealment and no directly embodied, visual, olfactory or tactile contact with the dead person. Instead, they built monumental, elaborate, stone and circular ‘houses for the dead’, arenas of communal gathering for dead and alive alike. They could have thrown the dead corpses into the sea, left them to be consumed by animals, abandoned them in remote places to vanish without a trace, as several societies do (Ucko 1969). But instead of dispersal, they chose accumulation and hoarding (Gamble 2004). Instead of solitary inhumations (as seen in other contemporary societies, for example in the Cycladic islands; Broodbank 2008: 59; Wilson 2008: 84–85), they chose public collective assembling, above ground. And they placed these monumental arenas at the centre of their social life, for several hundreds of years. These were places of return, of repetition, of citation, of recollection.

Table 18.1. *Approximate, relative chronology of Bronze Age Crete.*

Prepalatial	Early Minoan	3100–2700
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	(EM) I
Early Minoan IIA	2700–2400
Early Minoan IIB	2400–2200
Early Minoan III	2200–2000
Middle Minoan	2000–1900
(MM) IA	
Protopalatial	Middle Minoan IB 1900–1800
('Old Palace' period)	
Middle Minoan II	1800–1700
Neopalatial ('New Middle Minoan III	1700–1600
Palace' period)	
Late Minoan (LM)	1600–1500 (in
IA	'high', absolute chronology: 1700–1600)
Late Minoan IB	1500–1450
	(1600–1500 in 'high' chronology)
	Late Minoan II– 1450–1100
	Late Minoan III (1500–1100 in 'high' chronology)



Figure 18.1. Map of Crete with the sites mentioned in the text (adapted from Rehak and Younger 1998).

A dead person is carried to a *tholos* tomb from a nearby village, along with objects, some belonging to or perhaps relating to the dead (sealstones, figurines, stone vases), many, perhaps most, for the funerary ceremonies. As you enter the dark, humid spaces of the tomb through the only opening (its small and low entrance), in some cases having

to crawl in and even pull the corpse from inside, you are in a different world. You are disoriented, but only temporarily. Darkness, lack of space for movement and, above all perhaps, the strong odour of decomposing flesh, amplified by the enclosed, hemispherical space, transports you to a realm both spatially and temporality distinct, and markedly different from that of the everyday. Yet you have been here before. The smell is familiar, and the flickering light of the lamp aids the recognition of the micro-regions of the tomb. In some cases, you can even recognise distinctive objects, peculiar stone and clay vessels, and the odd sealstone, metal dagger or figurine. You recall persons long dead, you start making associations, you connect bones, skulls and objects with times, places, living persons.

With the rest of the congregation, you deposit your dead at a corner, a micro-locale identified by yourself and by others as the one that belongs to your side of the clan, next to familial dead. You take up some clay or stone vessels you brought with you; in this dark space, it is your touch that can see. Your hands can tell which vessels contain what, not only because of their visually distinctive shape but also because some of them carry plastic or incised patterns and decoration, thus enabling haptic recognition. You apply some of the perfume and unguent onto the dead body, and perhaps some onto the participants as well. Odour envelops and incorporates. It invades human bodies at will, and it is difficult to control and contain. Through the strong sense of smell, dead and alive become one, they become a trans-corporeal landscape. You deposit some objects next to the dead, and then perform a series of ceremonies, some inside, perhaps mostly outside in the open spaces around the tomb, which in some cases, most likely in the later stages of the tomb's use, were especially landscaped with walls and terraces to accommodate the increasingly large number of participants (the case of Agia Kyriaki, for example; Blackman and Branigan 1982; for other cases, see Branigan 1993). There is drinking, in some cases eating, dancing and possibly music. Psychoactive substances could also have been used, as indicated by the vessels imitating, in some cases very closely, the pod of the opium poppy (e.g. EM I

Koumаса; Xanthoudides 1971 [1924], pl. I). Eating and drinking together, becoming intoxicated together, strengthen the bonds that connect you with everybody else around you, including the non-breathing but still active and participating corpses.

Eating and drinking is an act of in-corporation itself, but commensality in-corporates you further into the collective body of the community. Intoxication and consumption of psychoactive substances transports you to other places and other times. You become a participant in a performative event. In this highly emotive setting, the sensory impact of materiality is stunning: it is the sensuous impact of eating, of drinking, of intoxication; of witnessing the corpses, and experiencing the odour of decomposing flesh, mixed up with the odour of perfumes and, in some cases, of cooked meat; of seeing and handling unusual objects, made of rare and exotic raw materials, in strange shapes and colours: multicoloured stone vases and beads, metal daggers and long, shiny obsidian blades, figurines, exquisitely carved seals made of ivory and rare stone, animal-shaped containers, painted and incised pots. The aesthetic impact of these objects would have been much more pronounced upon bodies in altered states of consciousness. Some of these objects possess long histories, embodying remote times and faraway places, objects often linked sensorially with their odorous, powerful and intoxicating content. This immense and dazzling sensorial-aesthetic impact produces strong and persistent memories, a type of prospective remembering (Sutton 2001), remembering for the future.

In this structured, heterotopic locale (a place of a different order, divorced from the rhythms of daily life; Foucault 1986), the temporality of everyday has been suspended. You, however, participate in the production of a temporality of a different kind and scale; you feel part of a long, ancestral lineage and continuity. Among the sensorially stunning and dazzling materials around you, the ones that have come from faraway are either complete objects or recognisably imported raw materials (e.g. obsidian, marble and silver from the Cyclades; occasionally exotic stones from

Egypt; Bevan 2007: 98). Others would have been made of more familiar, Cretan materials, but would have pretended to have come from exotic places, citing and imitating, for example, Egyptian or other motifs (Bevan 2007: 99). Others still would be in familiar forms and materials, but due to the wide circulation and use outside the funerary arena, they would have accumulated a long history and pedigree. Given the use of the tomb for hundreds – in some cases many hundreds – of years, some of these objects would appear to you as heirlooms, if not as ‘archaeological’ objects (Lillios 1999). All these objects and artefacts thus condense time and space, materialise multiple spaces and times simultaneously, and embody an ancestral geography. This is a geography that is perhaps mnemonically linked to places of mythical ancestral origin, loosely corresponding to the potentially multiple regions whence successive waves of immigrants came to Crete (during the Neolithic and the Early Bronze Age) (Betancourt 2008: 93–94), and/or the regions and places that were now linked to Crete though long-distance travel and exchange. I have called these mortuary contexts ‘chronotopes’, a term proposed by the theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (Hamilakis n.d.), or rather ‘chronotopic maps’, contexts where ‘time as it were thickens, takes on flesh, becomes ... visible...’ (Bakhtin 1981: 84).

You leave, knowing that you will return, time and again, to visit the recently dead, but also when another person from the villages dies. And when you come back, the memories of your previous visits will come flooding back, not in a tightly organised, linear and chronological manner, but chaotically, mixed up, commingled, much like the commingled corpses you will meet inside and around the tombs. After a certain time, the non-breathing body that you carefully placed, on its own, inside the tomb, the person that was still part of the social unit, and which was still active together with you, by being there seemingly bounded, distinct and visible, by being materially transformed, by emitting strong odours, ceases to be. Or rather, it ceases to be a continually active social person. Whatever is left of the corpse is pushed aside, piled up with other bones, flesh still attached to some of them. It is time for new space to be

created, so that the more recently deceased can find their place. New space needs to be created in social memory (Hamilakis 1998). Time for forgetting, or rather time for the creation of new, positively valued, space for remembering (Battaglia 1990). Time for remembering anew, recalling new persons, social actors, events and situations. Hence, all the practices denoting forgetting: the piling of previously distinct and bounded bodies into anonymous heaps, their disarticulation, their covering with a layer of soil, their breaking, their pounding, even the burning of what is left of the corpses (more characteristically, in the recently discovered cemetery at Livari in East Crete, where a significant part of the human bones were found burnt; Triantafyllou 2009). It is not that these persons will be forgotten as such; it is that they will now be remembered not as social actors still partaking in the rituals of social life, but as ancestors, defined by a different temporality.

The interplay and the dialectic between remembering and forgetting, however, operated at different levels. Even after familial social persons had become ancestors, the need to maintain a link with them would have been present. Indeed, in many of the communal *tholos* tombs of the Mesara, we witness strategies that, within the shared and collective burial arena, attempt to compartmentalise and subdivide the burial space, to group, arrange and redeposit bones and skulls in discrete locales: internal, subdividing walls in Kaminospelio (Blackman and Branigan 1973), Merthies and Plakoura (Pendlebury 1935); a stone-built, niche-like compartment in Lebena-Yerokambos II (Alexiou and Warren 2004: 56) (Figure 18.2); a collection of skulls and bones and careful deposition outside the tomb at Archanes Tholos G (Papadatos 2005) and elsewhere; use of clay coffins (*larnakes*) as sub-compartments and subdivisions of the tomb, containing multiple bodies and body parts (examples from Archanes Tholos G and E, Vorou A, and several other sites; Branigan 1993) (Figure 18.3).

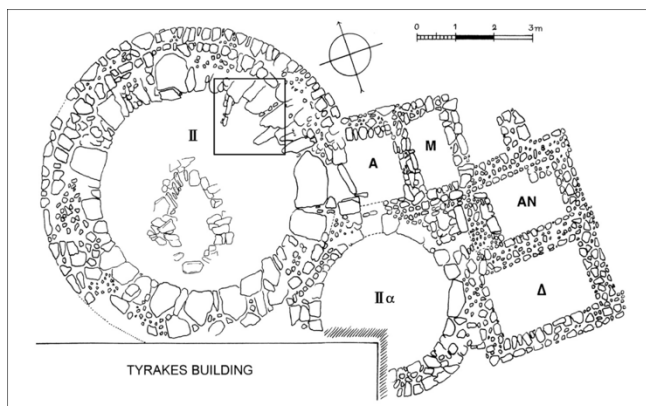


Figure 18.2. Plan of the Lebena Yerokampos II tomb, with the niche highlighted (modified from Alexiou and Warren 2004, fig. 12).



Figure 18.3. The interior of Tomb Gamma at Archanes (stratum II), from the west: *larnakes* after the removal of most of the bones (photo courtesy of Yiannis Papadatos).

Larnakes in particular are not only encountered towards the end of the Early Bronze Age, as conventionally thought. Rather, they are present from the start of the Early Bronze Age, as in the case of the Pyrgos cave, where 20 *larnakes* were found in an EM I–II context (Xanthoudides 1921). The use of *larnakes* has been linked (e.g. Branigan 1993: 66) to the emergence of the individual, but I have proposed instead (Hamilakis n.d.) that both the use of *larnakes*, and all the other compartmentalising material strategies outlined above,

are not expressions of individualism but rather attempts to render discrete and thus recognisable and traceable the ancestral corpses. As such, they are materialisations of ancestral remembering, attempts to delay complete forgetting, to map, identify and materialise discrete ancestral links and associations.

There was more than one sensory, experiential regime associated with the funerary arena in Early Bronze Age Crete. If you happened to live in the north or on the northeast coast of the island in EM I, and you were perhaps associated with communities that had distinct cultural identities, maybe emphasising an association with the Cycladic islands, then both as an alive and as a deceased person you would experience death differently from the rest of the island. Instead of the circular, built tholos tombs, you were likely to visit and eventually end up at a small, almost claustrophobic pit grave, shallow rock-cut tomb, or a slightly larger – but still tiny by the standards of the rest of the island – built tomb (e.g. Agia Photia cemetery in East Crete; Davaras and Betancourt [2004](#); Gournes cemetery in central Crete, near Irakleion; Galanaki [2006](#)) (Figures 18.4a–c).

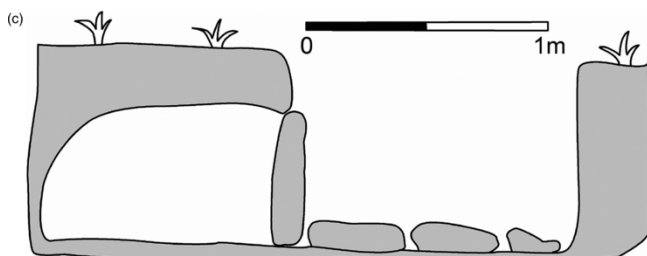
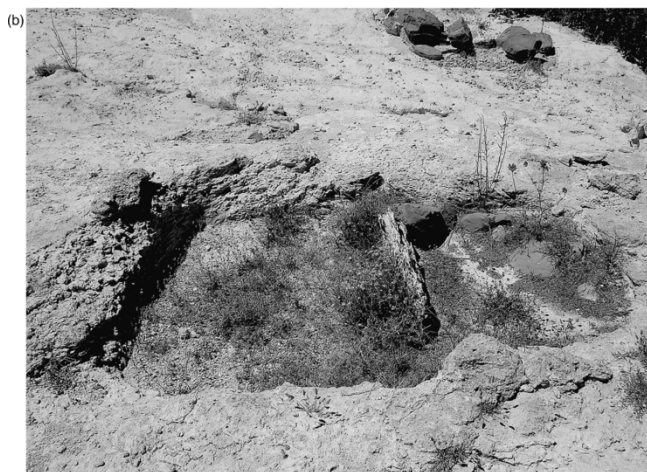


Figure 18.4. (a) The EM cemetery at Agia Photia (photo: the author, August 2011). (b) A tomb from the cemetery at Agia Photia (photo: the author, August 2011). (c) Section of tomb 218 at the Agia Photia cemetery (redrawn from Davaras and Betancourt 2004: fig. 493).

While at least on some occasions these tombs were used more than once, the regular pattern of visitation, of repetition, of continuous accumulation and hoarding of corpses and objects that we saw above were absent. After you placed the corpse inside these small spaces, along with clay *pyxides* (small pottery containers), some obsidian blades and perhaps a few other artefacts, you would drink, mostly from the communal drinking vessel of the time, the chalice (as you would have done in other burial contexts at the same time), passing it round among your fellow participants, although in some cases you would pour your drink from a jug into individual cups. You would not be able to experience the monumentality of the tomb, as you would have done in the Mesara for example, walking from the open air to the enclosed and dark space of the *tholos* tomb. You would not have been able to move inside the tomb, often passing through various compartments, or touch and smell the hundreds of corpses, at various stages of decomposition, as you would have done in the *tholoi*. The funeral would have been probably attended only by a handful of people (judging by the quantity of pottery). When you left, you would have sealed the doorway of these small tombs with stones (Davaras and Betancourt 2004: 240–41), you would have left the dead behind, breaking your link with them. In these contexts, forgetting seems to have been more important, and long-term history and ancestral heritage does not seem to have been valorised. Here, your dead seem really to die, both as a physical and a social person, at the end of the funeral. You want to ‘kill’ the memory of that person, by rendering the objects associated with them redundant, devoid of their agency: by bending a dagger or by smashing the chalice that served the drink during their funeral (Davaras and Betancourt 2004: 240).

It would be a mistake to say that memory was not important for the communities that used these ‘Cycladic’ Cretan cemeteries. It was – otherwise they would not have gone to the trouble to construct these tombs, to perform these ceremonies and to deposit these objects along with the corpses. It was, however, a different perception and

enactment of memory, one that places more emphasis on forgetting and on closure, one that does not require constant activation through repetition, citation and retracing of ancestral links and continuities, as happened with the *tholos* tombs. These two different perceptual modes of memory may correspond to the different histories of habitation and attachment to landscape, juxtaposing the relatively short-lived ‘Cycladic’ presence on the north coast with the long-lived engagement with place in the south-central part of the island.

Caves were used in some cases, continuing the Neolithic tradition (Zois 1973: 85), where practices similar to ones witnessed in other types of funerary contexts (especially in *tholos* tombs) were taking place: intense and repetitive ceremonies, eating and drinking, moving and mixing the skeletons, use of *larnakes* to subdivide the space (e.g. the most striking example of the EM I–II Pyrgos cave, mentioned above; Xanthoudides 1921). Phenomenologically, the funerary ceremonies inside a cave or rock shelter (unlike the small, cave-like rock-cut tombs) resemble very closely the experience of the built, circular *tholos* tomb. Indeed, Branigan (1993: 38–39) has suggested that the built *tholos* tomb imitates or replicates caves. Assuming that this observation is valid, two important points offer themselves: the first is that we witness here a mnemonic citation of a long ancestral tradition that goes back to the Neolithic; the second is that in building the *tholos* tomb, the replication of the sensory experience of the cave was more important than, say, functionality or hygiene (as we today perceive it); otherwise, why would you leave no openings? The dead, in a sense, were taken on a journey that led back to ancestral places – a journey, however, that both dead and living needed to make regularly, in order to retrace links and reactivate mnemonic connections.

From the EM II period onwards, rectangular, built tombs (sometimes called ‘house tombs’), with no apparent openings other than the entrance (sometime accessed through the roof), become prominent, especially in the north coast of eastern Crete (e.g. Mochlos, Gournia, Palaikastro, Petras,

Sissi), but also elsewhere (e.g. Archanes, Koumasa in the Mesara; Soles 1992: 114–201). These too are regularly visited, communal mortuary spaces, often involving the post-funeral selection, grouping and rearrangement of bone and skulls. These combine, in a hybridised manner, elements found in other mortuary traditions of Crete and the southern Aegean at the time (rectangular shape, built form, as in the Cyclades, but also communal, largely above ground, and large enough to allow the movement of people through them, as in south-central Crete). In some cases, they have also been characterised as ‘organic’ (Soles 1992: 210–11), since they incorporate the natural bedrock into their architecture and they use local stone for the rest of the building, thus giving the visual and tactile impression of being part of the wider natural landscape, not a human-made addition to it. These features bring them closer, phenomenologically, to caves, citing thus again older ancestral traditions that originated in the Neolithic. At the very least, here too as in the Mesara *tholoi*, revisiting and enacting the past materially was the crucial feature, evident not only in the regular visits and rearrangement of the bones, but also in the hoarding and curation of heirlooms: in at least one case, at Gournia, EM II vessels were found placed in a pit, inside tomb I, thought to have been built in MM I (Soles 1992: 9). These EM II vessels are believed to originate from the EM II tomb III, which collapsed. People took care to redeposit these in the later tomb. Even if tomb I was built in EM II and continued to be used through to MM I, the existence side by side of material that would have been clearly identified as coming from another time would have materialised and embodied strong mnemonic connections.

In the routine sensorial *habitus* of the everyday, all these funerary locales provided an extremely intense aesthetic stimulation, a multi-sensory phantasmagoria. Every visit to such as heterotopic mortuary space was an event of special significance, a break from the temporality of daily life. The emotive and highly charged ceremonies around death provided opportunities for people and communities to come together, to engage in commensal practices involving food,

drink and psychoactive substances, to witness rare and exotic artefacts and objects, but at the same time to move, collect, recollect and arrange skulls, bones and objects. They would have left with strong emotions, and even stronger memories, having traced and retraced geographical and chronological links, having mapped and remapped genealogical connections and associations. These were mnemo-scapes, places where people produced their own history and temporality, through strong sensory and sensuous experiences.

Through these contexts and events, time as memory – as ancestral links and associations, as mnemonic connections to places and past people, but also evocation, citation and recall of geographically remote places – became important political resources. Such resources were unequally distributed, as not all persons and clans, not all communities and regions, could have demonstrated the same richness and intensity in these mnemonic connections and links, the same time depth and longevity. Not everybody would have been able to amass the same material resources that could produce strong emotive and aesthetic-sensory impact upon the bodies of the participants. There are at times significant differences in the type and quantity of precious, exotic material found in different tombs, and the same asymmetry is witnessed in the time depth of use. The pattern is also regionally diverse, with the Mesara demonstrating a remarkable persistence and time depth in material practices and ceremonies, in comparison to, say, the northeastern part of the island.

Asymmetries bring tensions, especially at a time, such as the end of the Bronze Age, when some mortuary contexts become the gathering places of a larger congregation than before (Hamilakis 1998). The attempt to prolong ancestral remembering of specific people and groups within the communal space of the tombs through the various strategies of compartmentalisation and separation described above would have elicited opposition by others who would have insisted on the communal, shared ancestral memory. Finally, the nature of mnemonic recollection itself – its at times

involuntary, spontaneous character, its ability and agency to spring up unexpectedly and disrupt the created mnemonic consensus – would have produced further tensions (Hamilakis 2010). The omens were not good.

‘Palaces’? A Mnemonic Approach to the Question of the ‘Emergence’

Conventional approaches to Bronze Age Crete have been fixated with the question of the so-called palaces. Why did they emerge? Who was involved? Who lived in them? What was their function? Why in Crete and not in other regions, e.g. in mainland Greece which has far greater agricultural potential? Why Crete and not other Mediterranean islands of comparable or greater size? Increasingly, it has been realised that while some of these questions are still valid, others have exhausted their interpretative potential. Any attempt at an explanation will have to start by defining what is to be explained in the first place. If change is what we are trying to understand, what exactly has changed and in what direction? In this case, it is rarely clear what the entity to be explained actually is: is it a series of monumental buildings located at certain sites? If so, which phase of that building and which architectural structure exactly, given the continuous destructions and rebuildings of monumental edifices on the very same spot? Is it a novel centralised institution that, supposedly, exercised political, economic-managerial/redistributive, and administrative (not to mention ideological) control over its region, if not over the island as a whole?

These two issues are often conflated, but it is the latter that many cultural-evolutionist discourses advocate, having imported wholesale ideas developed by Service (1962) and other authors, complete with a typology of social forms (tribe, chiefdom, state) and a checklist of attributes to go with each type (urbanism, administration, ranking, subsistence redistribution, craft specialisation, and so on). Only models such as Service’s on subsistence redistribution as a path to centralised authority have been discredited (e.g.

Earle 1977; Pauketat 2007); as shown below, they also lack any firm empirical support on Bronze Age Crete. The often anachronistic use of Linear B data and the political organisation they imply (themselves a matter of considerable debate) to interpret the 'palatial' question many hundred years earlier is symptomatic of the confusion.

Other forms of homogenising and anachronistic thinking are evident in the discussion of the palatial phenomenon in the MM and Late Minoan (LM) I periods. Court-centred, monumental buildings are at the centre of attention, and the assumption is often made that the neopalatial ones are a further development of more or less the same form to be found in the protopalatial, court-centred buildings. But we now know that these complexes, despite certain similarities, are regionally diverse and did not develop at the same time everywhere, whilst the ones associated with the protopalatial period are very different from the neopalatial and much more archaeologically visible ones. The protopalatial complexes are smaller but more accessible than the neopalatial ones; they lack architectural features commonly associated with palaces, such as ashlar masonry, lustral basins and elaborate second floors, features that, interestingly, at sites such as Malia, are found in elite residencies in the town, not in the palace (Schoep 2004; 2006). In general, major innovations in architecture, administration and writing, pottery styles and long-distance movement of objects, often attributed to the agency of the palatial authorities in the protopalatial period, are now shown to be the outcome of diffuse social actors and groups, often residing outside palatial buildings (as in Malia), and being possibly in competition with palatial elites (Schoep 2006).

A striking feature of the neopalatial court-centred buildings is their proliferation, especially with the discoveries announced in recent years (see reports in Driessen *et al.* 2002), but also the replication of certain features commonly associated with palaces in elite monumental buildings, sometimes in very close proximity to the palace, making any discussion of settlement hierarchy,

territorial control and allocation of roles problematic (Hamilakis 2002). Even the first appearance of central courts themselves has become a much more complicated matter, and it cannot be linked chronologically or functionally to the conventional understanding of the palatial phenomenon. These seem to appear much earlier than originally thought: at Knossos, reorganisation of space and terracing took place in EM IIA (Wilson 1994; 2008: 87), and a central court was possibly created in EM IIB (Manning 2008: 109), about 500 years before the early palaces proper (conventionally considered to be MM IB). At Phaistos, the area that would become the central court in the protopalatial period had been a major arena for ceremonies since the Neolithic (Todaro 2009: 142), and the building activity associated with the first palace did not signal a sharp change, save for the addition of a monumental façade (Todaro 2009). At Malia, a monumental building with a court was built in EM IIB and, interestingly, was intentionally incorporated in the later, EM III/MM IA monumental structure (Schoep 2004: 245).

As for other features commonly associated with the palatial phenomenon, recent discussions and revisions render them equally problematic. Knossos was comparatively very large already in EM II (a minimum of 5 ha at the time; Wilson 2008: 88), although it grew much larger in EM III–MM IA (Whitelaw 2004: 243). Phaistos also increased considerably in size during the protopalatial period (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou 2004: 443). Asymmetrical access to resources, objects and materials was evident in the mortuary record from the beginning of the Bronze Age (Soles 1988). Co-ordinated building and terracing projects involving the mobilisation of a large number of people are also evident from the start of the Bronze Age in at least some of the very large *tholos* tombs, and in EM II monumental buildings and terrace walls at Knossos, Malia and elsewhere. Some sort of ‘administrative’ technologies and practices were present from at least EM II in the form of object sealings (Schoep and Knappett 2004: 26), and as for the earliest undeciphered forms of writing technologies (hieroglyphic, Linear A), these have shown no

clear links with centralised authorities, given the date of their introduction, their diversity and their dispersal in many different contexts (Schoep 1999; Schoep and Knappett 2004).

Craft specialisation and extensive networks of exchange were also present even in the Neolithic (Tomkins 2004), let alone the Early Bronze Age (e.g. Day and Wilson 2002; Whitelaw *et al.* 1997). As Whitelaw (2004: 236) notes, however, 'there is no evidence that either production or distribution was centrally organised, and there is no evidence for redistribution' (see also Day *et al.* 2010). The absence of clear signs of a leader or head of a state is now widely recognised (e.g. Driessen 2002; Manning 2008: 199), and an increasing number of researchers accept the possibility of factional corporate groups, unified by shared ideological and cosmological beliefs, including perhaps shared notions of ancestral time and origin, but engaging in intense conspicuous consumption and material, competitive 'wars' (Hamilakis 2002; Schoep 2004; Manning 2008: 199), not only in the neopalatial period, for which this idea was originally proposed (Hamilakis 2002), but also for the protopalatial as well, as least in contexts such as Malia (Schoep 2002). Crop specialisation and subsistence redistribution lack any empirical support in Bronze Age Crete (Hamilakis 1995; 1996). As for centralised storage, and thus the ability of the assumed palatial authorities to act as redistributive agents, the data are rather dismissive: both the early palaces (of the protopalatial period) (Manning 2008: 118), and the later palaces (of the neopalatial era) (Christakis 2008: 120; 2011) had, comparatively speaking, rather limited storage capacity in staple agricultural products.

It is thus surprising that even scholars who acknowledge this lack of evidence are reluctant to let go of cultural evolutionist typologies, perhaps because the use of terms such as states provides the illusion of an explanation, or at least conjures up an image of a seemingly familiar entity. Research in the last 15 years or so, however, has shown that the court-centred buildings and their associated structures,

rather than being centres of political authority, large-scale production of commodities, administration and subsistence redistribution, seem to be primarily centres of consumption, feasting and drinking, elaborate ceremony and performance (Day and Wilson 1998; Driessen 2002; Hamilakis 1995; 1996; 1999; 2002). Wine and olive oil, central to ideas of Mediterranean polyculture and subsistence redistribution, far from being staple subsistence commodities, were rather key substances linked to embodied ceremonies and sensuous interaction: wine due to its alcoholic properties, and olive oil as a base for perfumes and unguents (Hamilakis 1999).

Feasting and drinking ceremonies but also public consumption of material culture, especially that associated with the serving of food and drink, seem to become intense and conspicuous during the period we call protopalatial, compared to what was happening before (Hamilakis 1995; 1999). It is no accident that the pottery style most closely associated with the palatial phenomenon in the protopalatial period (although its introduction precedes the emergence of the palaces as conventionally understood; Momigliano 2007), the lavish, technically elaborate and aesthetically stunning Kamares ware, was produced mostly outside the palaces, and was linked to drinking ceremonies (Day and Wilson 1998). Equally, the introduction of the pottery wheel at the end of the Prepalatial period and the intensification in its use during the protopalatial period (Day and Wilson 1998: 352) to produce mostly drinking vessels (other shapes were wheel-thrown much later), often imitating metal forms (Knappett 1999; 2005: 156–62), coincides with intensified drinking ceremonies, possibly denoting a specific etiquette and aesthetic of drinking.

In other words, the prime concern of elites at the time was not a centralised administration and control of production, but a strong aesthetic and sensuous impact in ceremonial occasions. Power dynamics were played out in the arena of corporeal flows. While in the first century of the archaeology of Bronze Age Crete the question of the palaces was framed as a problem of hierarchy, leadership, territorial control, and accumulation and redistribution of material and symbolic

resources, in this second century the question increasingly is being reframed in a rather more productive manner. Why the huge emphasis on and the intensification of ceremony, mass commensality, elaboration, conspicuous consumption and performance at certain moments? Why did certain places become the focal points for such elaborate, ceremonial activity, and not others? From where do these ceremonies and performances acquire their material resources and their potency, and what was their experiential import, their social consequences and effects?

It is my contention here that collective memory – produced, activated and reproduced through bodily, sensorial experience – may provide a more fruitful answer to these questions. We saw above how mnemonic, sensuous practices were performed in the mortuary arena. In discussing mortuary practices, I emphasised mostly the creation and reproduction of mnemonic links at the level of familial, generational and ancestral ties. I now wish to expand the argument further, and argue that sensuous practices can also contribute to the production, reproduction and commemoration of long-term mnemonic history. I would thus propose that what we see in the palatial phenomenon, in other words monumentalisation, intensification of ceremony, elaboration and conspicuous consumption, can be viewed more fruitfully as *the materialisation, glorification and celebration of ancestral time, of long-term, mnemonic history*. In explaining this argument further, there are three components I would emphasise.

(1) Sense of Place

Phenomenological philosophers, with Edward Casey (e.g. [1996](#)) the most prominent, but also anthropologists (e.g. papers in Feld and Basso 1996), and some archaeologists have argued that a crucial property of remembering is its emplacement, its connection to specific locales that harbour remembering. Places and specific locales are constructed as special through bodily, collective experience. Places gather and hoard the memories from these experiences, memories that can be recollected and reactivated at a later time,

during a return visit to the same place, or evoked elsewhere. Repetition and citation of collective embodied experiences in specific locales create a mnemonic weight that can be given duration and further agency through materiality.

The places we associate with the palatial phenomenon in Bronze Age Crete – Knossos, Phaistos, Malia and possibly Petras (to stay only in the protopalatial period) – were special locales long before the monumentalisation and conspicuous consumption we associate with the palaces. Knossos is, to date, the oldest settlement on the island, and although its size and status in the Neolithic may have been exaggerated (e.g. Tomkins 2008), it was the largest settlement already in the Early Bronze Age. It also has a long history of ceremonial activity centred around commensality that goes back to the Neolithic (Tomkins 2007), activity that became more prominent from EM I, as indicated by the hoarding of large quantities of communal drinking (chalices) and food-serving vessels in a deep well (Wilson 2008: 83), but also other feasting pottery from EM II.

Phaistos also has a long history of occupation going back to the Neolithic, and in the Final Neolithic the site stood out in the region, not only because of its long history but also because of its association with pottery linked to the serving of liquids and with other ceremonial activity (Relaki 2004: 177; Todaro and Di Tonto 2008). The most striking materialisation of mnemonic links at the site is the recent suggestion that the building activity considered to have initiated the ‘first palace’ at Phaistos (phase XI – MM II) involved not only the clearance of the previous buildings but also the reuse of old walls as foundations for new ones, the respect of location and the reuse of open communal areas established in EM II, and more importantly the ‘re-deposition of part of their floor assemblages in purposely made pits’ (Todaro 2009: 141).

Other sites in the region that would become prominent in the Palatial periods, such as Agia Triada, also offer plenty of evidence for ceremonial eating and drinking from the Early Bronze Age (Wilson 2008). Malia was occupied at least since the EM II, not to mention the tantalising hints for a much

earlier, Neolithic occupation in the immediate vicinity (Tomkins 2008: 28–29). Petras was already an extensive settlement by EM IIB (Tsipopoulou 2002: 136), but the site seems to have drawn on a longer and deeper history. The protopalatial court-centred building at Petras is located on a hillside that faces, on the opposite hill to the east and only a few hundred metres from it, a Final Neolithic–EM I settlement (Papadatos 2008). Interestingly, it is on this same hill, and in the immediate vicinity of this Neolithic hilltop settlement, that the Prepalatial period people of Petras, who had since EM II established a settlement on the opposite hill, decided to ‘return’ their dead, a practice that included both house tombs and a rock shelter, and lasted right up to the foundation of the court-centred building in MM IIA. The burial rock shelter was not forgotten even in the neopalatial (LM IA) period, as finds of drinking vessels indicate (<http://www.petras-excavations.gr>).

All these places had become special through their long history of occupation and the repeated ceremonies of hospitality. In some instances, the successive occupation over many hundreds of years would have created an artificial mound (Knossos being the most prominent), a monumental, visible and tactile reminder of the long history of the site; in others, ruins of previous buildings would have served the same function. Moreover, we have become increasingly aware of deliberate attempts to create a mnemonic record of special events and ceremonies, by gathering, hoarding and thus preserving the material remnants, in pits, special deposits, wells and so on, a practice that aimed at materialising and making durable time and experience, thus creating material history (see Hamilakis [2008] for examples, and above, in relation to Phaistos).

(2) Sense of Embodied Commensality

It is no accident that the focal point of palatial buildings is the court, a place of gathering and ceremony, a place that acts as the arena for face-to-face, large-scale, embodied social interaction and public performance. At the same time,

by being situated at the centre of the palatial structure, by being paved and adorned and so on, the space of the court itself commemorates the act of gathering and of communal interaction (Palyvou 2002; Vansteenhuyse 2002). Other courts and open spaces are also prominent. Paradoxically, it is the apparent emptiness of the court (especially the central court) that makes it easier for subsequent generations to incorporate it into their own architectural design. This emptiness, however, is more apparent than real, since the void of the central courts is replete with memories: memories of past events and ceremonies and of communal and performative interactions.

Central among the communal ceremonies and performances taking place in these courts were the rituals of eating and drinking, embodied events where taste and smell were of paramount importance. It was these in-corporating acts that brought all other sensorial experiences together. It was the mnemonic effects of eating and drinking that produced embodied remembering, linking people with each other and with the locales, spaces, objects and artefacts that partook of these ceremonies. The places that we call palatial have not only had a long history of habitation and use, but also a long history of communal eating and drinking, a long history of embodied commensality. Interestingly, from the EM II onwards, these commensal events, through the proliferation of jugs and other serving pots, and vessels such as 'teapots' with their elongated spouts, increasingly seem to emphasise the role of the host, and his/her ability to provide for the guests, rendering the act of drinking in particular more theatrical and performative (Catapoti 2005; Day and Wilson 2004).

(3) Sense of Ancestral Lineage and Continuity

In the first part of this chapter, it was shown how in the Early Bronze and first part of the Middle Bronze Ages sensuous and embodied memory in the mortuary arena was crucial in establishing familial links and ancestral connections. From the end of the Early Bronze Age onwards,

I would argue, claims to ancestral lineages were performed much more intensely and competitively, both in the now transformed mortuary arena and in key settlement sites, which now acquire roles similar to the ones previously enacted by large communal tombs.

How is the mortuary arena now being transformed? We saw earlier that the communal tombs of the Prepalatial period enacted a dialectic between remembering and forgetting, between being able to trace lines of continuity with specific dead persons, and being able to relate to them only as the abstract collective of the ancestors. The arrangement of bones and skulls into piles, and the use of dividing walls, niches and *larnakes* to subdivide the communal space of the tomb, are indicative of this interplay. Towards the end of the Early Bronze and the beginning of the Middle Bronze Ages, however, such practices become more widespread and take more permanent and imposing material forms: *larnakes* are now used more often; small antechambers, creating many more compartments, are added to the *tholos*; and many late tombs are built with these antechambers as part of the original design (Branigan 1993). At the same time, some large tombs have paved areas and plazas added on to them, and judging by the ratio of cups to jugs where quantification is possible, more people participate in the drinking ceremonies (Branigan 1993: 27; Hamilakis 1998).

Some caves are used as ossuaries, and Agios Charalambos in the Lasithi mountains in east Crete is a characteristic and well-studied example. This important site seems to have received in MM IIB a deposition of a huge number of earlier skeletons and objects, spanning a long sequence going back to the Neolithic. These skeletons were sorted and carefully deposited, often arranged into separate groups within the cave, and were clearly at the centre of ceremonies involving eating, drinking and possibly music, as indicated by the presence of six *sistra* (a small percussion instrument) (Betancourt *et al.* 2008). If the *tholos* tombs of the Early Bronze Age can be seen as chrono-topic maps, as claimed above, this cave can be seen as a long-term mnemonic

archive that hoards and celebrates (as it seems from the finds, literally) long-term history and ancestral memory. An effort to trace links to specific individuals would have been futile, but the attempt to sort bones and skulls, and subdivide the space by building walls inside the cave and using its natural niches and galleries, thus keeping some bones separate from others, speaks of a need to trace and maintain links not with specific persons but perhaps with clans, and specific places of origin.

What do all these changes indicate? That ancestral memory and long-term history become at this time more important resources in the arena of political economy and competitive power dynamics. The embodied and sensuous rituals of commemorating the dead, combined with the embodied rituals of eating and drinking in the mortuary arena, attracted more people than before, making the stakes higher and allowing for more intense competitive performances of ancestral authority and long-term history and continuity to be played out. In some cases, such as Malia, it was the mortuary arena, and more specifically the EM III/MM IA-MM II monumental enclosure of Chrysolakkos with its palatial features such as ashlar masonry (Schoep and Knappett 2004), built not far from the early court-centred building, that materialised in the most direct manner the sense of ancestral lineage and continuity, a sense indirectly commemorated in the court-centred building. In other cases, however, it was the non-mortuary, palatial site itself in general, and the monumental court-centred buildings in particular, that embodied that sense of ancestral power and long-term history. I argue that it is the eventual transformation of direct, embodied familial links (expressed in the identification, handling and manipulation of bones) into more abstract but still embodied ancestral-historical links with places of deep history that allowed specific sites such as Knossos, Phaistos, Malia and possibly Petras to act as monumental places, foci of elaborate ceremony, commensality and performance, and locales towards which many people gravitated.

Embodied, mnemonic weight and history and its political

deployment would not have been enough. Other aspects of the phenomenon need to be taken into consideration. For example, palatial sites, especially during the protopalatial period, relied on an extensive hinterland of good quality agricultural land, whilst other sites, such as Mochlos, which in the Early Bronze Age had accumulated enormous material wealth through external contacts, lacked such hinterlands (Whitelaw 2004). Towards the end of the Prepalatial period, moreover, links with the eastern Mediterranean seem to become intensified, facilitated by improved navigational technology (Broodbank 2000; Manning 2008: 115). But these factors would not have been enough to explain the palatial phenomenon had it not been for the generation and deployment of long-term ancestral memory and history. Availability of agricultural resources or exotica on their own would have been inadequate without the symbolic resource of ancestral memory and history, and without the sensuous embodied collective rituals. Rituals of commensality and drinking events on a large scale were facilitated by access to prime agricultural resources; they produced new memories, but at the same time provided the performative, highly emotive environment for claims to power to be generated, epic journeys and ancestral feats to be narrated and orally transmitted, and exotic knowledge and objects to be exhibited, thus staging claims not only to remote times but also to remote places.

In a sense, however, the palatial phenomenon in Bronze Age Crete signified a victory of 'indigenism' and ancestral power over external contacts and externally generated senses of identity (see Robb [2001] for a similar argument regarding Maltese 'temples'). While for much of the Early Bronze Age, Crete appeared to be extremely diverse in terms of material culture, hinting perhaps at diverse groups, or at least at diverse projections of identity, towards the end of the Prepalatial period, there is more homogeneity and an emphasis and celebration of the local past of the island, as opposed to its external contacts and links. Interestingly, while links with the east intensify at this time, the actual number of finished imported exotic objects is relatively small. With the exception of some raw materials, it is rather

ideas and technologies that seem to have been imported (writing, faience, possibly the fast pottery wheel) rather than objects. Moreover, these ideas were adapted to suit the Cretan context and its history (Schoep 2006: 52–57). Exotica nevertheless would have been important as embodiments of geographical knowledge (Helms 1988), but given the highly competitive climate at the time, they were perhaps employed as part of competing discourses of power by groups that had access to long-distance travel, knowledge and acquisition. In fact, it may have been the intensification of external contacts, undoubtedly benefiting only certain groups, that would have led other groups and social agents to place more effort into the valorisation, celebration and monumentalisation of locality and its long-term history.

The palatial phenomenon therefore can be seen as the celebration, materialisation and monumentalisation of long-term, mnemonic ancestral history; this process, however, was highly contested. The phenomenon took its particular form through processes of competitive emulation (Hamilakis 2002; Schoep 2002; 2004) at a time when land (pack animals, carts) and sea (sailing) transport technologies facilitated further, intra-island communication.

Regimenting and Regulating Sensory Experience

The material effects of the ‘palatial’ phenomenon, the extreme elaboration and the conspicuous consumption and generosity, especially in the neopalatial period, more likely a by-product of intense competition among factions, created a material reality that transformed further the embodied and mnemonic experience of the people who participated in these intense ceremonial occasions. In the neopalatial period in particular (an extremely diverse material phenomenon), the sensory and sensuous experience of participating in ceremonies and gatherings in the palatial settings would have been dramatic due to the monumental scale of the buildings, the aesthetic impact of elaborate material culture, the multi-sensorial experiential import and effects of the

ceremonies, and the number of people participating in the gatherings which, judging by the number of drinking vessels, and especially conical cups deposited (very often in a formalised manner), would have been very high. Feasting and drinking reach immense heights (Hamilakis 1999), and there is plentiful evidence for the consumption of psychoactive substances, such as the large numbers of so-called ‘incense burners’. Deliberate deposition and hoarding of material culture, very often involving paraphernalia of eating and drinking, now becomes a more widespread phenomenon than before, acquiring at the same time a more formalised and ritualised character (Hamilakis 2008; Hatzaki 2009; and for the deposition and hoarding of animal bones at Nopigeia-Drapanias, see Hamilakis and Harris 2011). The intensification of this phenomenon, which I have termed the production of a ‘mnemonic record’ on the ground (in addition to the bodily mnemonic record), speaks of an intensified effort to preserve the material remnants of collective ceremonial gatherings, to fix and objectify intense sensorial experiences.

In the neopalatial period, therefore, ceremonial gatherings and events become much more ritualised, controlled and regulated, and human action and movement much more regimented, as a simple look at any architectural plan of a neopalatial, court-centred building with its labyrinthine human circulation patterns would reveal (Figure 18.5). As in previous examples and periods, however, there would have been a recurrent tension between the fluidity and ambiguity of sensory engagements and involuntary memory, on the one hand (how do you control smells? how do you tame memories?), and the attempt to regulate them and to fix meanings and bodily memories, on the other. The development of the palatial phenomenon signalled an intensification of this tension, one that reaches a new height during the neopalatial period. In that respect, the elaboration of architecture and its monumentality were not simply attempts to impress, to show off through conspicuous consumption. More importantly, they were attempts to regulate sensory modalities, to manage attention, through the regulated movement and conduct of the body, and the

controlled sensory interactions that this entailed. As the stakes in the political arena increased, feasting intensified, with more people taking part in the embodied, fluid, sensory rituals of eating and drinking. At the same time, the need to regulate and fix meanings and memories became more important than before. Yet these sensory experiences would not necessarily have had the intended outcomes and effects, and their fluidity and unpredictability are perhaps hinted in the deliberate, successive and often selective destructions that we witness in Bronze Age Crete.

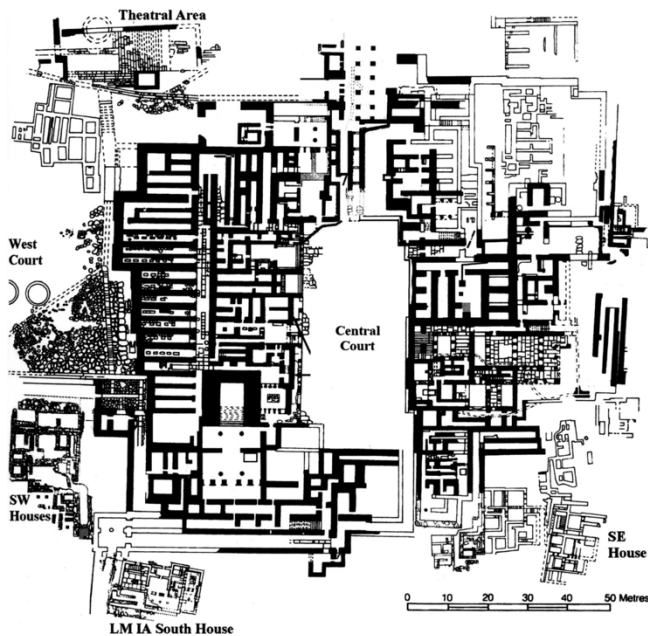


Figure 18.5. Plan of the Knossos 'palace' emphasising neopalatial (mostly MM IIIB) elements (modified from MacDonald 2002, pl. II).

Concluding Thoughts

Specialists on the Bronze Age of Crete often complain that in a number of key sites, successive rebuildings on the very same spot throughout the duration of the Neolithic and the Bronze Age obscure the archaeological visibility of earlier periods. They are, of course, right. But perhaps we should turn this phenomenon on its head and ask why there was

this obsession with specific locales and why the same spaces, and in some cases, the same buildings and objects, were continuously reused.

I have attempted to evoke here the power of ancestral links and associations, and of long-term mnemonic history, as important features in the social life of Bronze Age Crete. These ancestral and historical links and associations were constructed through intense, sensory, bodily engagements, through sensuous bodily memory. And while one could say that individual or even collective, familial or generational memory, seen as an abstract, cognitive and mental process, may not extend back beyond a few generations, it is materiality itself that provides duration (Bergson 1991 [1908]), enacts time as co-existence and produces long-term mnemonic effects: places and landscapes that were visited and revisited, and where ceremonies were performed, leaving material traces; buildings, the remnants of which were visible and tactile for centuries; artefacts that were found when digging for the foundations of new buildings; objects that were circulating across inter-generational time, accumulating historical and mnemonic value on the way. This materiality, however, acquires its mnemonic and historical weight through intense sensuous and multi-sensory experiences, the handling and manipulation of bones, the taste and smells of food and drink in commensal events, the multi-sensory and kinaesthetic impact of moving through a 'palatial' building.

This is not an argument for an ancestor cult, nor for static attachment to locales and places, nor for essentialist, genetic links and continuities on behalf of Bronze Age Cretans. In effect, this chapter attempts to reinstate the people of Bronze Age Crete as fully embodied, corporeal, experiential beings, but also to grant them the right to produce their own mnemonic histories (or their own archaeologies?), based on existing or assumed and materially manufactured links, histories that were, of course, subject to various political deployments by diverse social actors.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the editors for the invitation to contribute to this volume and for their helpful comments, to Nicoletta Momigliano, to the participants of the 2011 Heidelberg 'Minoan' conference for feedback and reactions, and to C. for help in preparing the location map (and for everything else). All remaining errors are my own. Sections of this chapter, in a modified form, appear in Hamilakis (2013).

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19 Beyond Iconography: Meaning-Making in Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean Visual and Material Culture

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Abstract

Artistic interconnections in the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean are often considered through the lens of iconography as a window onto motif transference. In this chapter, I argue that such approaches present inherent limitations that constrain our search for ancient meanings. Taking a more dynamic view of meaning-making as social processes of engagement between human beings and the material properties of objects, I investigate the case of cylinder seals in the Aegean and touch upon related issues for monumental ashlar masonry, frescoes, and Mycenaean pottery. Drawing upon Webb Keane's notion of bundled qualities, I trace conjunctions of various properties across material assemblages in order to suggest values and resonances that would have been central to generating meaning. I conclude with a brief consideration of these processes across the Late Bronze–Iron Age transition with respect to north Syrian carved stone reliefs.

Introduction

What is it exactly that we try to do when we study ancient artifacts and in particular those of visual and formal

complexity typically referred to as *art*? While there could (and indeed should) be many different answers to this query, one basic response that I suspect would garner fairly widespread support has to do with *meaning* – irrespective of whether we understand that meaning to be recovered, accessed, or (re)constructed by us as scholars. In simple terms, we might declare our purpose to be an attempt to get at the meaning of a particular work or corpus of art. Within the discipline of art history, as it has been practiced in ancient Mediterranean spheres, the traditional approach for discerning meaning has been derived, more or less, from Erwin Panofsky's (1939; 1955) method of iconographic interpretation (encompassing iconography and iconology). This method as typically deployed, while providing a wealth of data, has certain limitations and contains within it inherent contradictions that in fact constrain the search for meaning. Moreover, iconography posits an implicit immateriality to meaning as something that exists outside of the object.

In this contribution, I would like to explore an alternative avenue for approaching meaning in the visual and material culture of the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean – namely a consideration of what I call *meaning-making* as the ongoing outcomes of processes of engagement between human interlocutors and the materiality of the object itself. In other words, I take meaning-making as a socially generated enterprise conditioned by or arising from human–object interaction rather than a static epiphenomenal idea existing beyond the object (see, e.g., Osborne and Tanner 2007: 9). I am, however, not simply replacing one method of determining meaning with another, but rather moving beyond iconography to ask a quite different question altogether: not *what* does something mean, but *how* does it mean? That is, how do various properties of objects, in conjunction with one another and in interaction with human interlocutors, contribute to meaningfulness?

In making my argument, I explore several case studies of visual and material culture from the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean and then conclude with a short consideration

of the continuity of meaning in north Syrian Iron Age carved reliefs. The Late Bronze Age (ca. 1600–1200 BC) marks a period of expanding intercultural interactions, and, as such, questions of internationalism have often been a motivating factor in the study of this period's arts. Such studies tend to frame the question around either/or binaries: either 'international' or 'local' (and possibly a third option: 'hybrid'). Within a framework of more fluid, socially embedded and generated meaning, the opposition of international and local appears more fuzzy, the membrane between them much more permeable. For this reason, I do not pursue solely the determination of 'international' versus 'local' or shades of in-betweenness, but rather ask how, from among a concert of bundled qualities, some qualities gain prominence and produce effects in particular social situations. Moreover, some of these qualities may be unexpected (to us) because we have tended not to privilege them in our studies.

This study, therefore, explores how a consideration of meaning as social process might contribute to a more nuanced articulation of artistic, cultural, and social interrelations during the Late Bronze Age. The reader should be forewarned that this exploration will not result in any singular 'meaning' or even a number of separate but similarly bounded 'meanings,' but instead will yield proposals for resonances and values of fluctuating intensities at different times, places, and contexts. Given the entrenched position of iconography as a method of 'discovering meaning,' however, I first offer a brief overview of the iconographic method and its limitations.

Iconography and Iconology

At the outset, it should be acknowledged that the scholarly pursuit of iconography, understood to be the discernment of themes and subject matter, is neither attributable solely to Panofsky (Lash 1996), nor was it consistently propounded or practiced by him over the course of his career (from roughly 1915 to his death in 1968) (Holly 1984). Nonetheless, the iconographic method is most often associated with Panofsky

and in particular with his elaboration of it first in his 1939 *Studies in Iconology* and later in his 1955 *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (for a basic overview of iconography, see Lash 1996). In these works, Panofsky, seeking to bring rigor to the interpretive process, distinguished three different levels of analysis. The first is his so-called pre-iconographic description, the second is what he called iconographic analysis, and the third is his iconological interpretation. The pre-iconographic level concerns itself with formal description of a primary subject and 'pure' forms that carry natural meaning. For example, a dog is a dog. It requires only practical experience to engage in this level of analysis. The second level of iconographic analysis requires a knowledge of conventional subjects and meanings dependent on literary sources. The last level – iconological interpretation – considers the intrinsic meaning, which is regarded as a manifestation of cultural or period principles. The analyst of this level requires what Panofsky called 'synthetic intuition' or a deep familiarity with the 'essential goals of the human spirit.'

Panofsky's approach, however much embraced, has also elicited criticism with respect to each of the three levels of analysis. That of the iconological level has received the greatest attention, particularly the acknowledgment that implementing the approach at this broadest level while maintaining objective rigor is impossible (Holly 1984). In the field of the ancient Near East, for example, Lamprichs (1999: 42–45) complains that the requirement of the analyst to control a deep knowledge of the 'essential goals of the human spirit' entails an unacceptable degree of subjectivity. Expanding upon this type of critique but without necessarily taking subjectivity as a negative quality, Bann (2003) notes that Panofsky's method tends to move from the art object inward to a private truth rather than outward to a social dimension.

For this reason, some scholars have chosen to engage only with the pre-iconographic level of analysis, for example Crowley (1989: 5–6) in her monograph on artistic transference between the Aegean and the Near East.

However, the notion of the ‘pure eye’ and the possibility of ‘pure’ or ‘natural’ forms that supposedly underlie the pre-iconographic level of analysis have themselves come under critique as we become more aware sociologically of the intricate enmeshing of our perceptions with cultural norms and conditionings (Summers 1981: 111). The ‘formal’ aspects can no longer be taken as ‘natural’ but rather are culturally conditioned and bearers of meaning in their own right. Thus, like the third level of analysis, Panofsky’s pre-iconographic level has proven impossible to employ objectively (Potts 2003: 32).

The method’s strong reliance on texts – either an underlining textual tradition or a specific preserved text – presents yet another constraint on iconography’s interpretive utility. The privileging of semantic content over all else is inherent in the very term itself; iconography literally translates from the Greek as ‘image writing.’ Texts become the necessary prerequisite to any art historical analysis (Damisch 1975: 30–31). As such, texts serve as the explanation for an artwork’s iconographic existence. Thus, the study of the arts is occluded by a search for the appropriate text(s), with the artwork tacitly seen as an imperfect lens for conveying the ‘ideas’ of textual or nonmaterial expression.

While the iconographic method can be interpreted and deployed in numerous ways (Panofsky himself was not consistent in his use of it) and iconology purportedly opens the analysis to broader cultural and historical aspects, in practice an iconographic approach to ancient Mediterranean arts has typically entailed the attribution of semantic content to visual motifs. This has a number of drawbacks that limit our view. First, it implies singular meaningfulness rooted in a verbal/textual predecessor. This unique meaning resides elsewhere, the image/object being merely a surrogate for expressing it. Second, it tends unnaturally to divorce content from form, style, material, context, and other properties associated with the work. In localizing meaning solely in motifs (understood as subject matter) and eschewing multivalency, iconography denies the meaningfulness of

material and stylistic qualities.

In the remainder of this chapter, I pursue an alternative approach to meaning in the visual culture of the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean, with the express intent of moving beyond the shortcomings of the iconographic approach. I argue that meaning is an active, continually shifting process rather than a static, inherent entity, and therefore it is misleading to look for *what* something means as if it had only one, unchanging meaning recognizable to everyone. Instead, I would like to shift attention to consider *how* things mean. To do this, I draw heavily upon Keane's (2005) theories regarding materiality and signification. The critical element of his theorizations for my purposes is the concept of *bundling*, which acknowledges that 'a quality cannot be manifest without some embodiment that inescapably binds it to some other qualities as well, which remain available, ready to emerge as real factors, as it crosses contexts' (Keane 2005: 194). Thus, a 'motif' (itself contingently defined) is always bundled with multiple materialities of medium, form, scale, technology, and so forth, and these materialities can give rise to and transform social action and subjectivities, whether or not they are consciously recognized (Keane 2005: 186).

While multiple material possibilities exist within a single object, only some will be selected, interpreted, or responded to at any given time or by any given audience. This feature has two very important implications for our understanding of 'meaning' in ancient art. First, it posits that meaning is always bound up in the historicity of a given social setting, rather than stable and singular, an axiom that finds support in a number of other theoretical studies across the humanities and social sciences (e.g., Gombrich 1984 [1969] or Goffman 1967; 1974). Second, it provides an explanation for why and how meanings change over time and across contexts as different qualities of the bundled materiality come to the fore or recede from attention.

Late Bronze Age Artistic Interactions:

Beyond Iconography

If we accept that iconographic approaches entail certain limitations, as argued above, how might we move beyond these constraints in an examination of Late Bronze Age interactions? Rather than taking motifs as isolated entities that are the sole carriers of meaning, I entertain a range of material and formal qualities that, among other things, bear upon and constitute the ‘motifs.’ I am not advocating that we deny some subset of meaning residing in motifs. But I am arguing that motifs must be studied in tandem with, and at times subservient to, other properties. Thus, I hope to access potential ways that meaning might have been generated through an array of bundled qualities, some of which might have been more important than others at different times. In order to do this, I trace a number of qualities across assemblages, through intersections with additional associated qualities, and within depositional contexts in order to ask more holistic questions regarding the operation of meaning-making. And it is in the material assessment of bundled qualities, which intersect with, respond to, and catalyze social relations, that people can repopulate the discussion as co-conspirators (along with the objects themselves) in the ongoing production of meaning.

I should state up front that I am not principally concerned with production origins, and my analysis does not necessarily depend on whether an object was made locally or imported. On the one hand, international, foreign, or regional aspects may be evident among the bundled qualities of an object, and these aspects can and often do contribute to the processes of how objects make meaning. Yet, on the other hand, I do not want to reduce the attribution of an object or property to being solely *international*, *foreign*, or *local* because such designations imply a static and inherent nature to these qualities. For example, when is something ‘foreign’ no longer considered foreign but rather incorporated into new identities and meanings (Panagiotopoulos 2012)? When information regarding origins is accessible, it can contribute to our reconstruction of the meaning-making processes. Indeed, we can consider

‘origin’ as one of the bundled qualities of an object. But significantly, as only one of an almost infinite set of bundled qualities, origin may surface as relevant at some times but not at others. Origin was not necessarily the only quality of importance to the ancients and thus should not be the only goal of our intellectual pursuit. I argue that meaning is made through shifting encounters between humans and the material arts, in which different properties of a material object will come into high relief or recede into the background at different times, places, or within different frames or horizons of expectations. Thus, assigning singular designations such as *international* and *local* as an explanation for meaning is too reductionist.

It is impossible to be comprehensive in the context of this study (if, indeed, it is ever possible), and thus I have chosen to present only a restricted sample of material in order to explore more fully the range of possible meaning-making processes. I take one particular example – cylinder seals in the Late Bronze Age Greek mainland – as an extended study. This is followed by three shorter discussions on carved monumental ashlar architecture, frescoes, and Mycenaean pottery, meant to demonstrate the potential for applying this approach elsewhere. Among the bundled properties considered in these studies are: medium/material, form and shape, style, usage (adornment), techniques of manufacture (frescoes, ashlar masonry), architectural function (temples, gates), and devices of enunciation (narrative) – all of which, it is important to remember, point to human practices, skills, knowledge, and horizons of expectation.

Cylinder Seals in the Aegean

Seals are often used to trace cultural and artistic exchanges, and such studies typically privilege the contributions of iconography, composition (syntax), and style. In focusing on a case study of cylinder seals in the Aegean, I would like to move beyond this triad of traditionally recognized ‘art’ elements (iconography, composition, and style) to investigate not what but *how* seals meant. Seals are an ideal

object type to examine within a methodological perspective of bundled qualities because they encompass a range of different discernable features, such as shape, material, carving technique, style, iconography, composition, use/context. Although the entirety of bundled qualities always remains beyond our full comprehension, the multifaceted nature of the seal object presents a rich diversity of accessible properties.

In this section, I concentrate primarily on shape and material as contributing qualities to the ways in which seals made meaning. Certainly, seal studies have never neglected properties such as material and shape, even with respect to meaning (e.g., see Aruz [2008a](#): 231–32). Yet when scholars pursue the question of shape and material in relation to meaning, they typically search for a *singular* meaning attached to and carried by the property under study. As I have argued above, however, we can never capture a singular ‘real’ meaning for any specific property or object because meanings were/are in constant flux. These ongoing shifts in meaning occur by means of different combinations of properties on a particular object type, as well as when any given object participates in different human–object engagements. Thus, I explore the complex conjunctions of these two qualities, together with several other qualities, including the iconographic, to suggest the richness, diversity, and mutability of meanings that could arise within a nonetheless coherent realm of Aegean cultural tradition.

Seals are found throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and, as small easily portable items, might be expected to have traveled far and intermixed across cultures. For this reason, they are often the focus of analyses interested in cultural interaction and artistic exchange (e.g., how motifs might move from one cultural region to another) (Aruz [2008a](#); [2008b](#): 388–91). Relative to the entire corpus of seals from the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean, however, such peregrinations are rather rare. In fact, we see marked regional patterns in the production, use, and deposition of seals (see, e.g., Krzyszkowska [2005](#)). Sealing practices and seal types, styles, and iconography correlate strongly with

each other and with the distribution of their deposition. For example, on the whole, we find Aegean-type seals with Aegean carving techniques and images used in Aegean ways and found mainly in the Aegean region.

Nonetheless, a category of ‘international’ or ‘intercultural’ seals has been identified and hailed as a manifestation of artistic exchanges during the Late Bronze Age. This classification is based almost entirely on iconography and, to a lesser extent, on style – what Aruz (2008b: 391) calls ‘a subtle integration of Aegean and Near Eastern styles, syntax, and iconography.’ Unfortunately, many of these seals lack secure archaeological provenances, and so it is impossible to say anything certain about their geographic distribution (see Aruz 2008a: 214–22). One of them, however, was part of a thirteenth-century BC hoard from the so-called New Kadmeion Palace at Thebes in Boeotia, Greece (Figure 19.1). This hoard includes a large number of seals in lapis lazuli bearing Near Eastern imagery, and is often pointed to as an exemplar of intercultural exchanges during the later part of the Late Bronze Age (Porada 1981–82; Aruz 2008b: 286, 391; Kopanias 2008; Burns 2010: 135–39).



Figure 19.1. Lapis lazuli cylinder seal of so-called intercultural style from hoard at Thebes (Archaeological Museum, Thebes, Greece 203).

The Kadmeion hoard has been identified as part of a workshop or treasury whose final destruction occurred sometime in the thirteenth century BC. Although the most celebrated pieces are the group of 35 cylindrically shaped seals of lapis lazuli, carved almost entirely in the Near East, the hoard also contained a number of other items important

in considering the potential of bundled qualities across the assemblage as a whole (Figures 19.1 and 19.2) (Pini 1975: nos. 672–75; Porada 1981–82: 4; Aruz 2008a: 199; Kopanias 2008). These include: nine uncarved, cylindrically shaped pieces of lapis lazuli; a number of abraded, cylindrically shaped lapis pieces; and a series of variously shaped uncarved lapis lazuli beads that predominately take a barrel shape. In addition, there were three faience cylinder seals with gold leaf, one carved cylinder seal of bluish gray stone, one carved cylinder seal of agate, 66 uncarved cylindrical or barrel-shaped agate pieces, two agate stamp seals (one a three-quarter cylinder, the other an irregular half cylinder), one dark conglomerate lentoid stamp seal with gold caps, 11 large lapis lazuli ornaments in the shape of floral vegetation, 50 glass beads, and ivory ornaments. In a nearby locus, another collection of precious items consisted of 60 gold beads with fine granulation, additional lapis lazuli ornaments, and dark-blue glass paste pendants. The date of the deposition to the thirteenth century BC (though not necessarily the date of production for the individual objects within the hoard) is based on nearby LH IIIB pottery (Porada 1981–82: 6); the chronology of the Theban palatial architecture in this location nonetheless remains confusing (Dakouri-Held 2001: 83, 104).

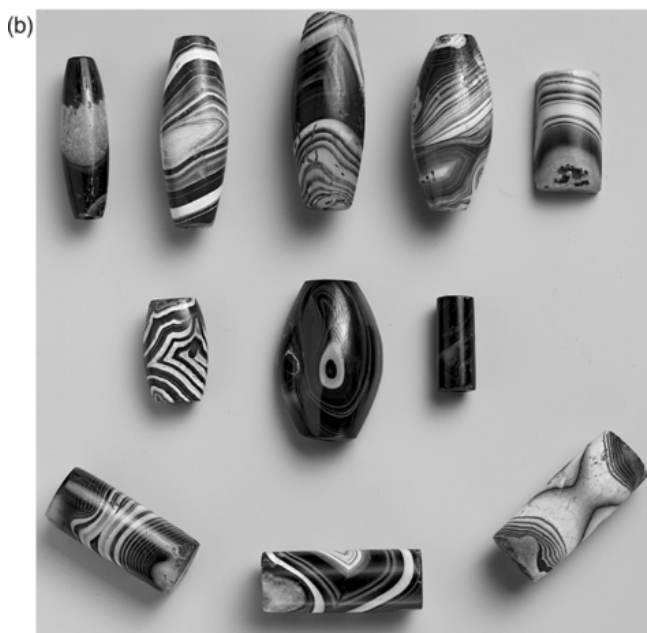


Figure 19.2. Beads and ornaments of lapis lazuli and agate from hoard at Thebes (Archaeological Museum, Thebes, Greece).

Porada (1981–82) produced the definitive study of the carved lapis lazuli seals from Thebes (but none of the other seals or other pieces from the treasure), focusing almost exclusively on their iconography, composition, and style, by which she assigned them cultural and temporal attributions. Porada (1981–82: nos. 3, 7, 8, and 11) also identified several seals that originated in earlier periods in Mesopotamia, which were recarved in Cyprus before arriving at Thebes. Most of the other lapis lazuli seals were also shown convincingly to have been produced in Mesopotamia, according to their iconography and style. The group of lapis lazuli seals is therefore typically classified as a foreign import into Greece. Yet it is important to note that Porada's initial decision to study only those items from the hoard that are carved, cylindrically shaped pieces of lapis lazuli, means that this group has one particular set of bundled qualities that effectively excludes bundled qualities associated with some of the other pieces that either have been studied separately or not at all (e.g., the cylindrical shape shared with the material agate). Because Porada concentrates principally on aspects of imagery for her analysis and because she selected a very particular subgroup within the hoard as a whole, certain connections across assemblage-wide qualities and beyond, such as shape, have received less attention.

That these are cylinder-shaped seals in themselves points to a bundled quality potentially bearing significant implications. In the eastern Mediterranean, that is, not including greater Mesopotamia, only Cyprus and the Levant consistently produce and consume cylindrically shaped seals during the Late Bronze Age (Aruz 2008a: 4). The other regions – Anatolia, the Aegean, and Egypt – use various types of stamp seals. Thus, one might propose that within a Late Bronze Age Cypriot or Levantine context, the cylindrical shape of the seal might have receded from importance, as its use was widespread during this period. In places such as Thebes in the Aegean, however, the cylindrical shape may have proved more interesting than the motif. Here, we might be able to glimpse not just a morphological distinction between (seals of) the Aegean and

(seals of) the Near East, but also explore how and why particular features resonated (or did not) in given times and places, thereby providing nuance to the process of adopting foreign features.

The suggestion that the cylindrical shape resonated more than the specific imagery or style is reinforced by the number of ‘blank’ cylindrically shaped ‘beads’ (non-seals because they lack carved imagery) found among the Thebes hoard, and by the lack of impact of Near Eastern imagery on Aegean seal imagery (Burns 2010: 137). Moreover, the general roundness and length of the cylinder shape may be understood to have an affinity (both morphologically and spatially speaking) with the barrel-shaped beads found among the hoard and popular throughout the Aegean. This barrel shape occasionally serves as a medium for carved seals (Aruz 2008a: nos. 122, 131–33, 136) and might be related further to one of the most popular seal shapes from the Late Bronze Age Aegean, the so-called amygdaloid (almond-like) seal, which is essentially a flattened barrel (Boardman 1970: 36; cf. Aruz 2008a: fig. 384a and 384b). One might then propose a morphological aspect to meaning-making in the Late Bronze Age Aegean in which cylindrical and barrel-shaped seals, cylindrical and barrel-shaped beads, and amygdaloid seals span a spectrum of variation in one associated and valued quality: a pierced, tubular shape suitable for stringing.

At the same time, we may examine other effects of bundling when we consider the rare occasion of what appear to be uniquely Aegean carved cylindrical beads (not necessarily used as seals from what we know of Aegean sealing practices). For example, two amethyst and one glass ‘cylinder seal’ were found as part of a group of beads that also included one amethyst and one carnelian amygdaloid carved seal, all of which were distributed around the neck of a male body in a LH I/II tholos tomb in the Argolid (Figure 19.3) (the so-called Kazarma tholos; Aruz *et al.* 2008: no. 258; Aruz 2008a: 167–69, 276, nos. 123–25). The three cylindrical seal-beads, dated between 1525–1450 BC, are distinctly non-Near Eastern in their material; amethyst and

glass are rarely used for cylinder seals of any period in the Near East. Moreover, the imagery and style of the three seal-beads are likewise non-Near Eastern and can plausibly be termed Aegean. One of the amethyst seal-beads depicts a female (possibly to be understood as divine) seated side-saddle on a lion confronted by a seated griffin. The second amethyst seal-bead shows a chariot scene that while popular in the Late Bronze Age Near East displays an Aegean element in the depiction of lions instead of horses pulling the chariot (Feldman and Sauvage [2010](#)). The glass seal shows an incomplete carving of a striding griffin. The techniques of carving also fit comfortably within an Aegean sphere of production (Aruz [2008a](#): 167).



Figure 19.3. (a) Necklace with two amethyst and one glass cylinder seal-beads from tholos tomb at Kazarma (Nauplion

Archaeological Museum, Greece, 15024–15038, 15120; Photograph by Bruce White; Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art). (b) Two amethyst cylinder seal-beads and two amygdaloid seal-beads of amethyst and carnelian from tholos tomb at Kazarma, with modern impressions (Nauplion Archaeological Museum, Greece, 15024–15038, 15120; Photograph by Bruce White; Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art).

What I wish to concentrate on here is not simply the identification of specific elements of Near Eastern or Aegean traditions, and nor am I concerned with the attribution of an Aegean production origin to these seal-beads. Rather, what is compelling about this example is the conjunction of shape (cylindrical) and material (amethyst and glass) with Aegean-type motifs and style. Moreover, to this group of properties we might add the material of agate, which also appears in similar situations, for example among the Theban hoard where a single, cylindrically shaped agate seal-bead with Aegean-type imagery occurs (see Aruz [2008a](#): no. 130). In addition, we can include carving techniques, as the hardness of these stones required specific technologies (e.g., the horizontal bow-lathe) that actively contributed to the final carved form (Younger [1989](#): 54). These conjunctions point to a nonrandom patterning of qualities that get bundled with shape and material within the Aegean world.

The lapis lazuli material of the Thebes hoard also clearly functioned as an important quality. Lapis lazuli comes from limited sources in the mountainous regions of Afghanistan and was exchanged along routes through Iran and Mesopotamia as early as the sixth millennium BC (Casanova [2008](#)). The deep, opaque blue, sometimes speckled with gold pyrite flecks, gave it a particularly high value in Mesopotamia and elsewhere during antiquity, the color associated with the sky and the heavens (Porada [1981–82](#): 6–8; Feldman [2006b](#): 117; Casanova [2008](#)). It is most likely this quality – blueness – that accounts for the large number of blue glass beads and ornaments found throughout the Aegean during this period, including at Thebes. Yet, as

Keane (2005: 187–88) notes, one cannot have only ‘blueness’ as a free-floating quality; it must always be embodied in some material form that will include any number of other qualities, such as the cylindrical shape. This cylindrical morphology, as an unusual shape in the Aegean that arrived bundled with the lapis lazuli material, may have appealed to Aegean peoples as a quality in its own right, rather than as a practical form designed for rolling out an impression (which the Aegeans seem never to have done).

Both the cylinder shape and the lapis lazuli stone were co-present in their bundling as part of the Near Eastern seals at Thebes. Perhaps Aegean people gathered the seals for the material, impossible to procure from within the Aegean, and subsequently found the exotic shape appealing. Or perhaps it was the shape that motivated their initial acquisition (since cylindrically shaped beads and a few scattered Near Eastern cylinder seals are known already in the Aegean from earlier times) and then the blue color resonated. Although it is impossible to say which, if either, quality was of initial importance, both qualities clearly became highly valued over time, more so than any iconographic or stylistic ones. This view can be supported, on the one hand, by the use of the cylinder shape for beads made out of other prized materials such as agate or amethyst and, on the other, by the widespread appeal of deep-blue glass for other precious ornaments. Perhaps by the time of the Thebes hoard, both the lapis lazuli and the cylinder shape were desired.

Thus, while the presence on a seal of imagery and style (the traditional subjects of iconographic studies) made these properties available for meaning-making, their bundling with shapes and materials whose resonance can be traced further afield suggest that they were not necessarily the primary driver of these processes in the Aegean. In other words, we should accept that style and motif co-occur as part of a group of bundled qualities that also include material and shape, but that they are not necessarily hierarchically the most important qualities at any given time or place. Indeed, it is the fluctuating intersections of these different qualities that I would suggest allow us to approach

meaning-making in the past through the patterned conjunction of certain qualities across time and space. And these conjunctions can signal which of the innumerable qualities found in a given item might have resonated at any one time and place.

Likewise, variations in such conjunctions point to meaning-making activities that might involve deselecting or substituting some traits. At Kazarma, the amethyst cylinders are accompanied by carnelian and glass beads, all three materials needing to be brought into the Aegean region from afar and valued on a par with lapis lazuli (Aruz 2008a: 166, 170–71). Glass, often downgraded by modern scholars as imitating semi-precious stones, should be understood as occupying an equally high register of value as indicated by the palatial monopolies of glass-working technologies seen, for example, in New Kingdom Egypt (Shortland *et al.* 2001). Perhaps we might see in this range of valued materials evidence of different kinds of engagements with the material world across the Aegean. That is, among a group of valued materials, some will stimulate particular responses in certain situations and not in others. These fluctuations in response can be measured, to some degree, by the frequency and patterning of the conjoined properties. For example, agate and amethyst cylindrical beads seem to rise to the occasion of being carved with Aegean-type imagery (they are also popular materials for Aegean-type stamp shapes), while lapis lazuli is practically never carved in this manner (the exceptions being one possible seal from the Theban hoard [Porada 1981–82: no. 38] and one from Knossos [Aruz 2008a: cat. no. 153]).

Last, I would like to take an expanded view of the Thebes and Kazarma seal-beads beyond the specific material properties of the items themselves. For this, I treat these artworks as a set of ‘distributed objects’ along the lines proposed by Gell (1998: 221–23). In discussing such sets, Gell makes the important observation that they come into being as a set only by historical accretion and deletion through networks of social relations in the past (ancient users) and present (collectors and scholars). We might

address here questions that have been raised over whether the Thebes hoard should be understood as a single collection that came to Thebes at one time or as a collection that resulted from years of acquiring Near Eastern seals. Porada's hypothesis that the lapis lazuli seals came to Thebes in two different ways – those with Cypriot connections trickling in over time, those from Kassite Babylonia proposed to be the booty of Tukulti-Ninurta I's raid on Babylon and subsequently sent as an Assyrian royal gift to the Mycenaean ruler at Thebes – has not received widespread acceptance (see, e.g., Aruz [2008a](#): 235; Kopanias [2008](#); Burns [2010](#): 137–38). But regardless of the history of their acquisition, that they constituted an assemblage at the point of the room's destruction indicates some belongingness of these objects to the/an ancient Theban. (While we have constructed this set as a contemporary analytic entity, when we take the hoard as a whole we adopt the set created by someone in the past.) A similar rationale might be extended to the Kazarma tholos grave goods: at the point of deposition, these items came together in some meaningful way to the community involved in the burial (Burns [2010](#): 103).

We might then define our set to include an extended range of pieces – cylinder seals, barrel-shaped seals, amygdaloid seals, cylindrical and barrel-shaped beads, along with pendants and other ornaments. Following Gell ([1998](#): 221), I take this set as a singular 'object' composed of 'many spatially separated parts with different micro-histories.' When this is done, we can see a pattern to all these items that links them as a distributed object of adornment. At first glance, the archaeological contexts of Thebes and Kazarma may appear to be quite different in nature. One is a late, end of the Bronze Age assemblage from a palatial workshop or treasury in Boeotia. The other is a relatively early (beginning of the Late Bronze Age) tholos burial in the Argolid. Yet taken as a set of distributed objecthood, we can see both within a meaning-making process associated with the adornment of the human body. Such a reading garners support from depictions of seals worn on wrists in wall paintings at Knossos and Tell ed-Dab'a in Egypt and the

importance accorded strands of beads more generally (Boardman 1970: 62; Aruz 2008a: 133; Betts 1997: 66; Younger 1992: 269, 272–73). A fuller consideration of the conjunction between cylindrical shape, specific materials, and human adornment lies beyond the scope of this chapter, but suggests ways to proceed in an investigation of meaning-making in the past.

In sum, this examination of material from the Thebes palace workshop and Kazarma tholos burial suggests that patterns can be discerned from the conjunction of several object properties, namely shape, material, iconography, style, and context. Yet while such patterns emerge (such as the conjunction of agate or amethyst cylinders with Aegean-type carving styles and motifs), they are not straightforward or homogeneous across time or space. This variation appears to indicate a process of meanings being made and remade with each iteration, in which certain qualities either continue or cease to be valued and selected. Aspects of local and foreign traditions are part of this process, yet similarly dynamic and unstable in their contribution to meaning-making. For how long should we consider the cylindrical shape as foreign? For how long (or for whom, or where) did its difference from the Aegean seal and bead tradition cause it to stand out? Because the qualities of shape and material are typically not studied as equal contributors in the generation of meaning (iconography being the privileged domain of meaning), I have shifted emphasis to them in my discussion. It is in the differing conjunctions of *all* these properties, however, that we begin to see how certain properties resonated in concert with others. The fluctuations of resonance in turn point to valued aspects that would have served as prime contributors to meaning. Indeed, I would argue that it is in deducing value and resonance across conjunctions of properties that we can begin to access *how* objects meant.

Monumental Ashlar Architecture

An analysis of bundled qualities as proposed above for assemblages of seals and beads in the Aegean offers a rich

pool of variables and a complex intersection of their associations for an investigation into meaning-making. In the following three short case studies, I would like to present some possible additional directions in which an approach derived from Keane's bundling coupled with a notion of the processes of meaning-making might be applied to Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean interactions. None will be explored in any depth, and all rely heavily on work done by other scholars; they are meant more to provoke future inquiries than to answer specific questions. From the small-scale and easily portable aspects of seals, I move next to monumental architecture to consider an instance in which iconography or, better stated, subject and composition – as qualities bundled with architecture – might contribute to new ways of thinking about aspects of internationalism and meaning during the Late Bronze Age.

Iconography (in the sense of motifs, not meaning) tends to be our default feature for assessing internationalism in the cultural sphere. Yet when iconography does not yield satisfying results for this search, we look for other features or properties to label as 'international.' My next case study is such an example: the use of ashlar masonry in monumental architecture around the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age. Here, I again want to turn the equation on its head and suggest that we need to look at motif and composition as properties that get bundled with monumental stone building in different ways in different places, and that complicate our notion of ashlar masonry as something 'international.' In particular, I would like to explore some ways in which narrative devices are, or are not, deployed in conjunction with monumental architecture.

Monumental architecture constructed from large, well-worked ashlar masonry has been proposed as one, non-motif-driven, instance of internationalism during the Late Bronze Age – examples occurring in the Aegean, Anatolia, Cyprus, the Levant, Egypt, and even the central Mediterranean (Hult [1983](#); Blake [2001](#); Hitchcock [2003](#); [2005](#); Fitzsimons [2007](#); Nelson [2007](#); Schoep [2007](#); Knapp [2008](#): 201–49; Fisher [2009](#)). Hult's seminal study of this

phenomenon focused on a cross-cultural comparison of building techniques (orthostat, ashlar flooring, etc.) and building functions (domestic, temple, funerary, etc.) in order to evaluate sources for the appearance of ashlar masonry on Late Bronze Age Cyprus. Relief carving on the ashlar masonry, however, is only mentioned in passing. For example, in the case of an illustration of the ashlar masonry from the wall of a temple of Seti I at Abydos, no reference is made to the imagery carved across the blocks and reproduced in the plate (Figure 19.4) (Hult 1983: 35, fig. 43). Following the notion that all properties bundled together have the potential to stimulate interest and thus to generate meaning, however, we might consider the bundling of carved relief and ashlar masonry as an avenue into meaning-making with respect to architecture in the Late Bronze Age.

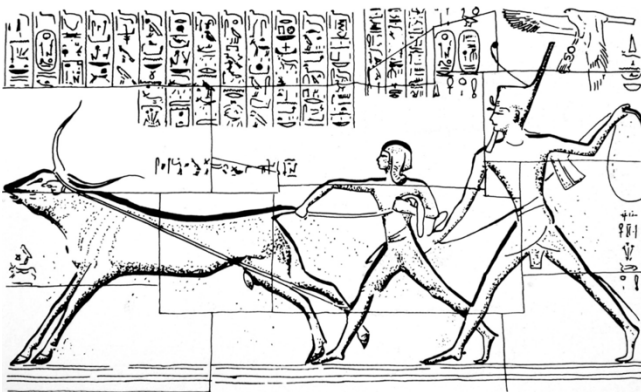


Figure 19.4. Drawing of temple of Seti I from Abydos (after Hult 1983: fig. 43).

As a first level of analysis, we can note a distinction between those ashlar constructions that incorporated carved figural reliefs (primarily in Anatolia and Egypt) and those that did not (the Aegean and Cyprus), as well as areas that complicate the picture in having both (namely, the Levant: Ugarit, Megiddo, Shechem, Gezer, and Lachish without; Alalakh, Hazor, and Ebla with) (Hult 1983). Monumental carved stone reliefs in conjunction with ashlar masonry are found almost exclusively in the Hittite sphere of Anatolia

and in New Kingdom Egypt. The few exceptions to this geographical distribution are Hittite-type examples from the more northerly Levantine sites of Alalakh, Ebla (Middle Bronze Age) and Hazor. A further level of analysis could then consider the specific qualities of subject matter, composition, and placement among those sites that include relief carving on ashlar masonry buildings. In both Anatolia and Egypt, the carving tradition is primarily associated with temples and mortuary installations; the principal Hittite example, however, comes from the site of Alaca Höyük where a monumental gateway boasted ashlar blocks with carved reliefs ([Figure 19.5](#)) ([Mellink 1970](#)). Nonetheless, the subject matter, styles, compositional devices, architectural placement, and scale all set these two traditions apart, bundling together quite different features with monumental ashlar masonry.



Figure 19.5. Reconstruction of carved relief blocks at gateway of Alaca Höyük (after [Mellink 1970](#): fig. 2).

A comparison of the Anatolian and Egyptian carved relief ashlar blocks raises an especially intriguing question regarding the use of visual narrative. Although specific narratives (i.e., specific stories) attract considerable attention in iconographic studies, the deployment of narrative itself, as a particular form of visual expression, is typically taken as a given, being an obvious and natural product of a textually driven analysis. A materiality-based perspective emphasizes that the visual telling of a story requires that certain physical properties come together in order to give embodiment to the story and that these properties conjoin with the techniques of ashlar masonry and the layouts of architectural space in specific, bundled ways ([Keane 2005](#): 188).

One might ask why Egyptians during the New Kingdom period turned to visual and textual historical narratives on

their monumental temple and mortuary architecture? Why did the massive ashlar walls of these buildings, which had carried ceremonial and ritual imagery for millennia, suddenly present themselves to the New Kingdom rulers as a 'canvas' for the depiction of extended historical (mostly military) narratives? And what future outcomes might have derived from this appearance of historical narrative bundled with monumental stone masonry, for example, in Assyria (Feldman 2004)? Or, in a perhaps more enigmatic scenario, one might ask the opposite: why do the Hittites avoid the expression of narrative in their reliefs, in favor of iconic and paratactic arrangements of divine and royal figures? The latter question gains in interest, given the generally accepted relationship between narrative and imperialism proposed for modern European history by postcolonial scholars such as Said (1993: xiii), and seemingly applicable to the situations of New Kingdom Egypt (Pittman 1996) and Neo-Assyria (Feldman 2006a). In contrast, the Hittite Empire, although rivaling those two in military power and political clout, eschews visual narrative as a rhetorical mode, whether narratives of military success or otherwise.

Along with this avoidance of narrative (and again unlike in Egypt, where effort was made to hide the seams between ashlar blocks and imagery ran across blocks regardless of their edges), Anatolian carving maintained the boundaries of the blocks, best seen at Alaca Höyük. One can then look at other bundled qualities, for example the architectural placement of the carved reliefs. In Hatti (as well as those Hittite-type examples from the Levant), the relief occurs on lower courses. In Egypt, the relief covers the entire expanse, with the privileged position for narrative scenes placed high on the walls. Thus, in spite of the similarities that we perceive in the 'international' deployment of ashlar masonry, these two very different, regional bundlings of ashlar masonry, narrative or non-narrative imagery, and architectural placement point to the divergent ways in which monumental architecture *meant* in Late Bronze Age Egypt and Hatti.

Frescoes

Facture or technique contributes yet another perspective on the processes of meaning-making. In particular, we can investigate facture to determine how certain production technologies bring into being various associated qualities apart from iconography, such as the looseness and freshness of painting in the *al fresco* technique, and that can impact iconography as it is embodied in form (see, e.g., Brysbaert 2008: 162). The case of *al fresco* wall and floor paintings with strong ties to Aegean (in particular Minoan and Cycladic) traditions found in Anatolia, the Levant, and Egypt during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages is often referenced in discussions of international exchanges (Aruz *et al.* 2008: 123–31). In the second millennium BC, beginning in the Middle Bronze Age, but now plausibly shown to have continued into at least the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, the *al fresco* technique of painting on damp plaster without additional binding agents appears around the eastern Mediterranean with the highest concentration in the Aegean but also elsewhere (at Tell ed-Dab’a, Egypt; Tel Kabri, Qatna, and Alalakh in the Levant; Hattuša in central Anatolia; Miletus in western Anatolia; and Ialysos on Rhodes) (Brysbaert 2008). Although this technique is standard practice in the Aegean, elsewhere it stands in stark contrast with preexisting wall paintings in which the pigments are applied with some form of binding agent to an already dried plaster surface (Feldman 2008).

While discussions have tended to focus on the identity of the artists producing the frescoes or on the technical aspects of the frescoes, rarely have the implications of the bundling of qualities attendant with the use of the *al fresco* technique been considered within the realm of meaning-making. Brysbaert (2008) has pursued related concerns, noting the intertwining of technology, iconography, and style in the *al fresco* paintings around the eastern Mediterranean. She argues that myriad aspects of the technology directly contributed to processes of meaning-making (Brysbaert 2008: 181–85). I cannot pursue these implications in any detail here. Some considerations complementary to Brysbaert’s work, however, might include, for example, how the undulations and modeling of the plaster surface

contribute to a viewer's experience of the work and therefore that viewer's response in deriving and/or ascribing meaning. Likewise, the impressions of guide strings snapped into the wet plaster organize the two-dimensional space of the wall, grounding the visual experience in the tactile materiality of the surface. In contrast, the sheen of the surface in conjunction with the looseness of brush strokes and the lack of intensity in the saturation of the pigments permeating the plaster bring bundled with them aspects of fleetingness, atemporality, and otherworldliness that operate in tandem with the chosen imagery.

Mycenaean Pottery

By opening up the meaning-making process beyond the iconographic identification of single motifs, we are able to investigate instances in which shared motifs do not necessarily generate shared meanings. In these cases, the same type of object with the same kinds of imagery might elicit quite different responses because of very different circumstances of meaning-making engagements. Such an example can be seen in the case of Mycenaean pottery found outside the Aegean. Pottery, in particular Mycenaean painted wares, form one of the central corpora of material culture invoked in discussions of Late Bronze Age artistic interconnections (e.g., Leonard 1994). Pottery in general often forms the basis for studies regarding trade and exchange. But it is the pictorial, and specifically figurative, nature of Mycenaean pottery – unlike almost all other Late Bronze Age ceramics – that has captured modern scholarly attention and been the focus of many studies regarding their special role in eastern Mediterranean cultural exchanges. Their distribution spans the eastern Mediterranean, with the highest concentrations in Cyprus and the Levantine coast (van Wijngaarden 2002; Bell 2006). Scholars have seen these vessels as having not just economic and practical value but also aesthetic value for the ancient populations who acquired and used them.

Yet a closer look at the evidence shows complex interplays between international exchange and regional reception. For

example, van Wijngaarden (2000; 2002) has proposed that differing cultural significance was attached to Mycenaean pottery, such that the same type of vessel or the same motif might have resonated differently in different regions or even among different strata of a single population (van Wijngaarden 1999; a similar scenario has been proposed for Minoan pottery in Egypt; Barrett 2009). Van Wijngaarden (2000: 75–77) argues that meanings derive from the relationships between a material object (such as a Mycenaean vessel) and cultural practices. For example, while we accord the specific imagery found on a Mycenaean vessel as the privileged unit of our analysis, van Wijngaarden (2002: 52–53) records a case at Minet el-Beida, the port city of Ugarit (present-day Ras Shamra on the Mediterranean coast of Syria) where eight Mycenaean amphoroid krater fragments – seven of which were of the pictorial type – had been pierced through the center of each sherd, with their sides being smoothed. Van Wijngaarden argues that their archaeological context, and in comparison to other ceramic sherds known from Minet el-Beida and Ugarit, indicates they had been deliberately chosen because they were part of Mycenaean pictorial amphoroid kraters and then deposited as a group. Yet in none of the examples is the pictorial motif recognizable. Considering the situation from the perspective of bundled qualities and shifting meanings, one might propose that some qualities of these vessel types appealed to one or more ancient inhabitants of Minet el-Beida, and that whatever these qualities were – it is hard to say now which they might have been – they do not seem to have related to the specific motif depicted, although the painted aspect of the vessels is clearly bundled with it.

Thus, the shape and decoration of Mycenaean pottery found around the Mediterranean carried no single meaning, but rather intersected with varying local and regional systems of value that contributed to and shaped the way in which meanings were constructed around and in response to the material properties of the vessels. Indeed, van Wijngaarden (2002: 66) proposes that figurative imagery was not necessarily the central feature of interest and, in discussing the differing values associated with Mycenaean

pottery at Ugarit, claims that ‘although the decoration on the vessels will certainly have been noticed, it does not seem to have been of consequence for the way these vessels were used and deposited in the archaeological record.’

Conclusions: Meaning-Making across the Late Bronze–Iron Age Transition

The preceding discussion has focused on the dynamic nature of meaning; it is always situational and relational. The bundled potentialities of what might be selected or overlooked in any given object highlight the fluidity of meaning, endowing the notion of meaning with historicity and contingency. Acknowledging this has profound implications for understanding the continuity of motifs seen across the transition from the Late Bronze Age into the Iron Age.

Such continuity appears, for example, in the carved architectural reliefs of the north Syrian city-states. The earliest of these reliefs, dating perhaps as early as the eleventh century in places such as Aleppo and Malatya, display strong ties to Hittite-carved architectural reliefs, with scenes of deities and libations carved in rounded forms from heavy basalt blocks. Later reliefs from sites such as Tell Halaf are intriguing in their use of motifs that in the Late Bronze Age are more closely associated with small-scale luxury goods of precious metals and ivories. Indeed, at Halaf, Winter (1989) has proposed that Iron Age ivories, which themselves show connections to Late Bronze Age examples, served as the model for the large-scale reliefs. Because the Late Bronze Age motifs are now bundled with new qualities of scale, material, technology, and context – and all these bundled qualities can potentially contribute to processes of meaning-making – their meanings must be something more than simply a continuity or repetition of the same meanings as were operational in the Late Bronze Age (especially since meaning-making during the Late Bronze Age has been seen to be constantly in flux). How might an assessment of other properties beyond the motifs provide

information concerning processes of meaning-making during the Iron Age? How can we understand these other properties contributing to *the way in which* the new monumental reliefs meant?

As just one possible avenue of inquiry, a comparison between the Late Bronze and Iron Age architectural deployments suggests significant innovations in the meanings generated by the later reliefs. While at first glance the use of carved reliefs in the north Syrian city-states appears to continue and even mimic architectural reliefs from the Hittite Empire period such as those at Alaca Höyük, in fact crucial differences set the later reliefs apart from their predecessors. Relief production in general expanded to include many more sites than was the case during the Late Bronze Age when architectural reliefs concentrated around the capital of Hattuša (and the nearby sites of Alaca Höyük and Yazılıkaya). In addition, each north Syrian site erected many more reliefs than in the Late Bronze Age, often lining the exterior of entire buildings and public spaces, as seen for example at Carchemish (Winter 1983). The sitings of the reliefs within the towns and their relationships to one another also diverge from the earlier period. As far as we know, during the Late Bronze Age, Hittite-carved reliefs appear principally in association with gateways, as at Hattuša and Alaca Höyük, and in ritual/funerary spaces such as Yazılıkaya. While such locations also receive relief decoration in the Iron Age, the use of reliefs expands to encompass major public buildings and open venues presumably constructed for the purpose of gatherings and spectacles. This radical increase in relief production and consumption might be understood within various processes of decentralization, competition, and escalation among the now autonomous city-states that were no longer under the vassalage of the Hittite state.

Meaning-making in the Iron Age north Syrian city-states thus seems closely related to negotiations of emerging identities (social, political, ethnic) among a large number of fragmented entities (Brown 2008), in contrast to Hittite state strategies linked more to the consolidation of authority and

power in the singular locus of the king (the Sun) and his relation to the divine and ancestral worlds (Bonatz 2007). Acknowledging these differences makes the material references to the Hittite state, seen in both the selection of motifs and the choice of carved relief as a medium, stand out yet more forcefully in their physical linkages to the past, thereby actively constructing and maintaining collective memories of community and identity.

This brief foray into meaning-making in the Iron Age and its associations with the earlier Late Bronze Age points to the benefits of considering materiality diachronically. While meanings are constantly being made and remade through different encounters between people and objects, this process in itself grows accretions that contribute to the generation of meaning. Thus, the past can be drawn upon for its very quality of pastness. But in so doing, new dimensions of meaning also arise with the new engagements between people and things – things that are compilations of multiple qualities, some embodying pastness and some embodying presentness. Rather than being anchored in a singular textually defined unity, meaning continually changes, being renegotiated in part through the material contributions of objects themselves. The diachronic study across the Late Bronze–Iron Age transition, whatever we make of its degrees of continuity or disruption, highlights the salient point that the bundled qualities of any object are not a fixed set of properties but rather shift over time as new qualities accrue, while others are lost or become obscured (such as origin). These qualities might be conceived of as still materially present and potentially accessible, but no longer of interest, while other properties may in fact no longer be accessible. Indeed, we cannot even list all the qualities packaged in any given material item or assemblage of things – this is beyond our comprehension. But through links across assemblages, through time and across space, we can speculate about various qualities that resonated at different times and that, in so doing, actively contributed to fluid processes of meaning-making.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Stephanie Langin-Hooper for her perceptive feedback throughout the process of writing this chapter and for her initial suggestion that I consider Keane's theories as an alternative to iconography. I would also like to thank Cindy Colburn for reading a draft and offering her thoughts from an Aegean perspective.

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20 Changes in Perceptions of the 'Other' and Expressions of Egyptian Self-identity in the Late Bronze Age

R. Gareth Roberts

Abstract

Images and writings in mortuary contexts typically portray a strong self-identity for Egyptian elites, but only generalised identities for those who dwelt beyond, i.e. the Nubians, Libyans, Asiatics and 'northerners' from 'the sea'. In Theban tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, these northerners were subordinate, even subservient, tribute-bearers who were presented to the king by high elites. In royal mortuary temples of the later Ramesside period (principally Medinet Habu), they were depicted as dangerous assailants who were turned back from invading Egypt by the king's martial prowess. In both contexts, the designers of the images and the composers of the writings portrayed the northerners as stereotypes, ones that were appropriate to the purposes of the commission regardless of any historical 'truth'. The aim of this chapter is to use evidence from Theban tombs and mortuary temples to show that expressions of 'others' and of self-identity changed as the Egyptian elite adjusted to a new perceptual reality, one in which Egypt increasingly became part of the Mediterranean world.

Introduction

In the early days of Egyptological research, it was generally

accepted that mortuary evidence provided a useful historical tool. In many respects, this is a reasonable assumption because texts found in tombs and chapels are often presented as biography: (1) scenes apparently pertain to the life and times of the deceased; (2) those interred are commemorated as real, named people; and (3) from the First Intermediate Period (ca. 2150–2050 BC) onwards, there are explicit claims of veracity (Frood 2007: 9). More recently, however, it has been realised that this greatly oversimplifies the situation, because Egyptian scribes and artists followed discernable patterns – some have even postulated the existence of ‘pattern books’ – when preparing tomb decoration. Thus, rather than presenting a simple reality, the interred were shown in an idealised manner (Guglielmi 1973: 214) that brought their post-mortem identities into line with the purposes of the commission. Elite tombs would have reflected the general expectations of Egyptian high society more than the actuality (Panagiotopoulos 2001: 275), and it is not usually possible to tell the difference between the occupant’s identity as a representative social agent and the deeds of an actual individual during life. Tombs do not necessarily reveal historical ‘truth’ (Baines 2011: 61).

When non-Egyptians are included in tomb scenes, problems of historicity are compounded. Designers typically attributed only the broadest and most generic of identities – stereotypes – to foreigners (Leahy 1995; Redford 2000: 10–11; O’Connor 2003: 155), who are shown in very few roles in tomb scenes. Relations between individual Egyptians and individual foreigners, or different groups of ethnically related foreigners, must have varied widely, and one cannot assume that the Egyptian stereotypes were representative of foreign activity. Accordingly, identities ascribed by Egyptians cannot be used as general evidence for the motivations or attitudes of others. One might, however, be able to examine such representations to gain insight into Egyptian cultural expectations of those they encountered: there must, after all, have been good reasons for Egyptians designers to incorporate foreign groups – such as the ‘northerners’ who came from ‘the sea’ examined here – into

elite and royal mortuary complexes during the New Kingdom.

Northerners in Theban tombs

Representations in Theban private tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1540–1300 BC) typically show northerners as offering-bearers. These tombs generally belonged to members of the Egyptian high elite – high priests of Amun, viziers, and mayors of Thebes – many of whom held several positions during their careers. It is generally held that scenes therein provided an opportunity for the earthly identities of the interred (or aspects of them) to be displayed to those who visited, and for those identities to be projected into the afterlife, perpetuating the individual, reinforcing institutional ties and collective memory, and fostering a post-mortem social memory (Assmann 1992: 170; 2002: 70).

Theban tombs contain three essential architectural layers (Hartwig 2004: 16; Froid 2007: 6): the uppermost level or superstructure was associated with the solar cult, the middle level (which remained accessible after interment) with the occupant's personal mortuary cult, whilst the bottom level (the burial chamber proper) was related to the realm of the dead and closed off. Design elements most directly related to the deceased's personal identity and to the world in which he lived were contained in the middle level, where scenes in the outer, eastern (actual or notional) section of the transverse hall of a typical Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tomb tend to be concerned with the earthly identity of the deceased, showing status, relationships and the social environment (Wegner 1933; Hartwig 2004: 16). The images and textual elements associated with tomb decoration probably had a number of functions, which Hartwig (2004: 37–43) breaks down into two main, and probably not mutually exclusive, types: (1) magical images that assured and supplemented the afterlife of the deceased, and (2) commemorative images that memorialised and presented his (almost always 'his') status, and confirmed his identity in a social framework.

What is not immediately clear is whether the artworks show specific events. Many analyses of Theban tomb art start from the assumption of reality, to a greater or lesser extent. The earliest scholars were in little doubt: Davies considered it ‘disconcerting’ that a High Priest of Amun, Menkheperreseneb, could be ‘negligent’ (Davies and Davies 1933: 4, n. 1) in his depiction of foreign chiefs in his own tomb (Theban Tomb 86; see Figure 20.1), and felt that the representations of foreigners in the tomb of Kenamun (Theban Tomb 93) were ‘unsatisfactory’ and ‘samples of inexactitude’ (Davies 1930: 23). Some more recent analyses, such as that by Wachsmann (1987: 8), also suggest that the tomb decorations hold a record of historical events, albeit with a number of figures depicted as hybrids either to provide variation – perhaps to reinforce difference or to incorporate the ‘other’ into the Egyptian world (see Feldman 2006: 61) – or because the artist had no pattern book to hand. Panagiotopoulos (2006: 371) has agreed that processions in Theban tombs ‘contain a fairly faithful account of historical circumstances’, which runs somewhat counter to his earlier assertion that artistic endeavour in the Theban tombs provides an ‘accurate record of the manipulation of historical truth in the Egyptian court’ (Panagiotopoulos 2001: 275), rather than historical truth itself.



Figure 20.1. Figures captioned ‘the chief of *Keftiu*’, ‘the chief of *Hatti*’ and ‘the chief of *Tunip*’ in the Theban tomb of Menkheperreseneb, Theban Tomb 86 (after Davies and Davies 1933: pl. IV). Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration

Society.

I am more inclined to concur with his earlier interpretation. Certain themes, which Hartwig (2004: 73–76) calls ‘icons’, repeat across generations. When northerners are represented in Theban tomb decoration it is, with one possible exception, within what Hartwig calls the ‘tribute’ icon, a scene-type that shows the presentation of exotic goods by respectful leaders from distant lands, and is largely confined to the ‘court’ style tombs associated with officials who served in military, civil, palace or regional administration (Hartwig 2004: 33). Often the tribute icon is associated with the ‘royal kiosk’ icon (Hartwig 2004: 54–73), since the offerings brought by tribute-bearers are often shown presented to the king by the deceased, presumably as part of his official function.

The tribute icon probably operated on a number of levels. It contained generalised depictions of what ought to be (an Egyptian concept represented by the word *maat*), potentially showed representations of the actual trade networks in which Egypt took part in the New Kingdom, revealed the cosmic power of the gods through the agency of the king, and demonstrated the superiority of Egypt over its neighbours (Hartwig 2004: 74–76). Panagiotopoulos (2006: 396–97) observes, probably rightly, that the idea of equality among royals of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean, even among ‘Great Kings’ (a term that perhaps derived from the Hittite [Sumerian] ideogram *lugal.gal*; see Starke 1977: 288), was something of an anathema to Egyptian rulers who wished to regard themselves as superior to all others. Theban tombs contain numerous illustrations of this ideology. For example, four figures captioned ‘Foreign chiefs who came in peace’ are shown standing before a large pile of exotic goods in the tomb of Puyemere (Theban Tomb 39), making what is presumably a gesture of deference with their hands (Davies 1922–23: I, pl. xxxiii; Wreszinski 1923–35: I, 149; Wachsmann 1987: pl. xxiv:a/b). Wachsmann (1987) considers the figures to be hybrids rather than actual peoples, but if Vercoutter (1956: 191) was correct in his

suggestion that they might symbolise peoples from four generalised distant lands, their purpose in the tomb need not have been a depiction of historical reality. Instead, it would present an idealised reality in which the designers incorporated both the movement of goods around the Mediterranean (and African trade networks), as well as the Egyptian assertion that much of the known world, including that beyond direct influence, was subservient to Egypt. As Hartwig (2004: 17, n. 104) notes, the biographical texts and the images in this tomb are not directed towards those in the scene but at those beholding the image. They reinforce cultural expectations.

A second example, in the tomb of Menkheperreseneb (Theban Tomb 86), shows several figures presenting goods before the tomb occupant and a royal kiosk. Three of them are captioned to indicate northerners: ‘The chief of *Keftiu*’, ‘The chief of *Hatti*’ and ‘The chief of *Tunip*’ (see [Figure 20.1](#); Davies and Davies 1933: pl. iv; Wachsmann 1987: pl. xxxvb). The scene is on the west wall of the transverse hall, north side, where Hartwig (2004: 16) suggests that scenes related to the earthly life of the deceased should be; both Davies and Davies (1933: 4) and Wachsmann (1987: 35) believe that it contains elements of historical truth. The tomb was decorated in the reign of Thutmose III (ca. 1480–1425 BC), and thus at a time when delegations from northern lands might have visited Egypt: Hittites appear for the first time in the Egyptian record in the so-called royal Annals, which state that they brought tribute to Thutmose III after his eighth campaign (Sethe and Helck 1906–58: 701.11; 727.13). As Davies and Davies (1933: 4) noted, however, the Hittite in this scene (second from the left) looks like another Syrian, ‘as if a Hittite could not be distinguished from any one else north of the Egyptian boundary’. This seems disingenuous. The figure in this tomb is one of the earliest depictions, if not the earliest, of a Hittite by Egyptian artists, who typically portrayed foreigners as stereotypes. If a standard iconography for Hittites had yet to develop, it is reasonable for the artists to have fallen back on more familiar models, and it is more likely the scene is principally intended to represent the ideal

that the peoples of the world acknowledged Egyptian superiority.

Texts in Egyptian tombs often contain information that differs from what is displayed in reliefs, but the inscription above the foreign chiefs in the tomb of Menkheperreseneb complements it:

Giving honour to the lord of the Two Lands and worship to the perfect god by the chiefs of every land. Praising the victories of his person (Thutmose III), with their tribute on their backs, being every product (?) of the land of the god – silver, gold, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and every great and precious stone – being offered so that the breath of life might be given to them. (Theban Tomb 86; Davies and Davies 1933: pl. iv; all translations are by the author)

In the tomb of Rekhmire (Theban Tomb 100), which is the best-preserved of the Theban tombs, this attitude is unequivocal:

Coming in peace by the chiefs of *Keftiu* and the islands in the middle of the sea, bowing and with lowered head before the power of his person, the dual king Menkheperra (Thutmose III), given life forever. For they hear of his victories in every foreign land (and come with) their tribute on their backs, presenting so that they might be given the breath of life through the desire to be loyal to (lit. ‘on the water of’) his person, so that it (the breath of life?) be given through his power by the confidant of the sovereign, the mayor and vizier Rekh[mire], who received all the tribute of every foreign land that is brought to the power of his person. (Theban Tomb 100; Davies 1943: II, pls xviii–xx)

In this passage, the superiority of Egypt is shown in the statement that the foreign lands come begging, with bowed heads, for the ‘breath of life’ (which in Egyptian is a phrase signifying capitulation; Israeli 1998). While it is Rekhmire who accepts the tribute and who is the focus of the scene, it is the power of the king – exemplified by ‘victories in every foreign land’, a boon granted by gods such as Re and Amun to the king, their ‘son’ – that brought the foreign chiefs to him bearing ‘tribute’. Thutmose was worthy of tribute because of his power and magnificence.

The mention of *Keftiu* in this inscription is pertinent to my discussion here, because this place has long been associated with northerners from the sea (for the general location of *Keftiu* and other sites mentioned in the text, see Figure 20.2). The identification of *Keftiu* with Crete was probably first proposed by Brugsch (1857–60: II, 88), who had read in Lepsius’ *Denkmäler* (Lepsius 1849–56: III, pl. 39b), a text now recognised as being another from the Theban tomb of Rekhmire, accompanying another tribute icon:

Accepting the tribute of foreign kings,
together with the tribute of Punt, the tribute
of Retjenu and the tribute of *Keftiu*, and
together with the plunder of all foreign
lands, brought to the power of his person,
the dual king Menkheperra (Tuthmosis III),
may he live forever. (Theban Tomb 100;
Davies 1943: II, pl. xvi)

Brugsch read *Keftiu* as ‘Kfā’ and made an intuitive leap linking that name with the island of Caphtor, from where the Hebrew Bible states that the Philistines had originated (e.g. the ‘remnant of the isle of Caphtor’; Jeremiah 47.4), and which had generally been identified as being Crete by the mid-nineteenth century. Since this initial speculation, the equation of *Keftiu* with Crete has become widely accepted, although there has been occasional argument about what the phrase ‘*Keftiu* and the islands in the middle of the sea’ meant. Hall (1901–1902: 175), in a paper that

sought to link the northerners in Theban tombs with Sea Peoples, thought Brugsch was wrong to suggest *Keftiu* only meant Crete, mainly because ‘Mycenaean’ (by which he meant mainland Greece) objects were shown in Theban tombs. More recent analyses tend to recognise that one cannot define Egyptian conceptions of places beyond Egypt in modern terms. The names of many places are known from Egyptian texts dealing with lands to the north, but some, such as ‘Retjenu’ and ‘Djahi’, seem to describe vaguely defined areas of Egyptian-controlled territory in the southern to mid-Levant rather than specific locations. The two may have been different names for the same general area. One should not expect such names to be standardised and consistent, as Gardiner (1947: I, 142*–49*) assumed when discussing them, and some recent examinations still tend to do (e.g. Cline and O’Connor 2003: 110, who state that Djahi was ‘roughly modern Israel and Palestine’). *Keftiu* appears to describe a specific place, albeit one of 8336 km² if it does equate to Crete, while ‘islands in the middle of the sea’ is more general. Accordingly, it is perhaps better to regard ‘*Keftiu* and the islands in the middle of the sea’ as a stock phrase that, as Panagiotopoulos (2006: 392) argues, probably denoted ‘the Aegean islands, sometimes including Crete or even mainland Greece’, depending upon how and where it was used, and that these were in the northwest and reached by sea. It should be noted that Brugsch’s ‘Kfā’ text includes names for three rather generally conceived and distant areas: *Keftiu* in the northwest, *Retjenu* in the northeast and Punt in the far south. This arrangement reminds one of the conceptual theme of hybrid foreigners from the tomb of Puyemere mentioned above (Vercoutter 1956: 191).

Egypt had been in contact with Aegeans, either directly or via intermediaries, long before offering bearers were included on the walls of Theban tombs, even back in the third millennium BC (Kemp and Merrillees 1980: 256). Following the reestablishment of Theban control of the Delta at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, wall paintings argued to be of Minoan-style were applied to the walls of palaces in Tell el-Dab’a/Avaris (Bietak *et al.* 2007),

suggesting that the post-Hyksos rulers inherited that city's connections with the Mediterranean. Avaris was the most important gateway city linking Egypt with the Mediterranean for much of the second millennium BC, evidenced by the large quantities of Levantine, Cypriot and Aegean imports found there in both pre- and post-Hyksos contexts (Czerny 1998); like all gateway cities, it would have been a meeting place for people of many ethnicities and cultures (Marcus 2006). The presence of these friezes strongly suggests the presence of artists who, if they weren't themselves Cretan, were at least well versed in Minoan artistic traditions; it also implies the presence of Aegean people in Egypt (and probably *vice-versa*) a generation or two before the Theban tombs discussed here were constructed.

If people of Aegean, and perhaps even Cretan, origin were known in Egypt long before the construction of the Theban tombs, then Egyptian artists ought to have had time to develop a representational style upon which they could draw. Indeed, the fact that Davies and Wachsmann were able to point to 'true' representations even among the earliest depictions presupposes that there was an accepted stereotype by the time these tombs were begun. Yet the presence of 'hybrid' northerners demonstrates that accuracy was not considered essential by the tomb designers. Their identity as 'tribute' bearers whose goods were accepted by the occupant was more important.

The scenes and texts in Theban tombs commemorate the deceased, but the action is oriented towards the king (Frood 2007: 11). Those that include northerners identify the tomb occupant as one who served the king in an ideal fashion: as a dutiful administrator who received or recorded goods brought by fittingly subordinate foreign groups. To the Egyptian elite of the Eighteenth Dynasty, these northerners provided means for cultural reinforcement, showing those who came after that the deceased lived as someone of his standing ought to have lived, and would wish to be remembered.

Northerners at Medinet Habu

Northerners depicted at Medinet Habu, the mortuary temple of the Twentieth Dynasty king now generally known as Ramesses III, serve a similar function, albeit in a different way. Mortuary temples had been constructed near to a king's burial place since the Old Kingdom to commemorate his reign and to act as a centre for the king's personal cult. Their design and construction were part of the machinery of resurrection that would ensure that the deceased king attained divinity in the afterlife. Because this was the monument's primary purpose, 'historical' scenes or texts carved upon mortuary temples cannot be treated simply as historical records, for although topical aspects of a reign might be presented, they will have been set within an idealised framework that conformed to the temple's purpose: in modern parlance temple decoration will have been subjected to 'spin'.

This spin can be observed in the presentation of the antagonists in the year-eight campaigns at Medinet Habu, who are now generally and collectively referred to as Sea Peoples. These antagonists were identified in both specific and general ways according to context, and the inscriptions from Medinet Habu pertaining to the year-eight campaigns contain both (for the text, see Kitchen 1975–83, vol. V: 37.10–43.1; Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 46.15–46.26; for translations, see Edgerton and Wilson 1936: 49–58; Wilson in Pritchard 1955: 262–63; 1969: 262–63; Peden 1994: 26–35; Kitchen 2008: 32–36). At the outset, the text presents a first-person section in which Ramesses describes how he stabilised Egypt upon his accession to the throne:

Egypt was astray, having no shepherd, and
they (the Egyptian people) were under an
affliction because of the Nine Bows. I
surrounded it and made it firm with my
strong, capable arm.

The narrative then moves into the third person, and

attackers are introduced:

The foreign lands made a conspiracy in their islands. Dislodged and scattered by war were the lands at one time. No land could stand before their arms.

The text then mentions the destructive character of the coalition:

Beginning with *Hatti*, *Qode*, *Carchemish*, *Arzawa*, and *Alashiya*, they were cut off at ... [one time?]. A camp was [pitched] in one place within *Amurru* – they destroyed its people, and its land was like that which had never come into being.

Next, the ultimate goal of the antagonists is described, and their fate presaged:

They came, while the flame was made ready before them, forward to Egypt.

Only then does the inscription state the identities of the attackers, with a qualifier reinforcing their unity:

Their confederation consisting of the *Peleset*, *Tjeker*, *Shekelesh*, *Denyen*, and *Weshesh*, lands united.

Finally, the motivations of the antagonists are suggested:

They set their hands upon the lands that they might surround the earth. Their hearts were confident and trusting, (saying) ‘Our plans are being realised!’ (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 46.15–46.18)

These sentences are all that this text allows to describe the enemy and their motivations in a manner that resembles a historical narrative (also Yasur-Landau 2007: 611–12): there was strife in other lands (as opposed to the now-secure Egypt) and, banding together for nefarious purposes, these foreign lands destroyed five well-known states of the period before devastating *Amurru* and setting up a camp with the intention of conquering their way south into Egyptian territory. Almost all of what follows, 20 columns of text, is a paean to Ramesses' magnificence, with only a brief description of the measures he took to avert the perceived threat.

For most of the compositions at Medinet Habu, the year-eight aggressors are referred to simply as 'foreign lands'; only rarely is any other information appended. A caption accompanying the sea battle scene describes them as being 'the northern foreign lands, which were in their islands' (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 37.8–37.9), before stating briefly that they entered the Nile mouths and then elaborating on the king's great prowess in defeating them. The essence of this statement is repeated in a speech by the king in the scene in which he is shown celebrating his victories, where the attackers are called 'the foreign lands who came from their islands in the middle of the sea' (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 42.2–42.3). Both these lines recall the descriptions of northerners in the Eighteenth Dynasty. The attackers are named only once in the context of the year-eight campaign, where five assailants are listed in what is perhaps intended as a counterpoint to the five devastated lands (they are also listed in a year-twelve inscription from Medinet Habu, which again recounts Ramesses's great deeds; Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. II: pl. 107.4–107.8). The emphasis is on their unity rather than their individuality ('confederation', and 'lands united'), and on the desire of all foreign lands to attack Egypt, which was the only great power strong enough, under the leadership of Ramesses, to stand, alone, against their 'conspiracy'.

This motif of united northerners is carried over into the pictorial representations. In both of the major battle scenes

associated with the year-eight campaign, the northerners who were described as *Tjeker*, *Peleset*, *Denyen* and so on are presented as a barely distinguishable mass. In the land battle, some are riding in chariots and some in ox-drawn carts (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70: I, pls 32, 34), and in the sea battle, they travel in non-Egyptian ships (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70: I, pls 37–41). With the exception of *Sherden* in the sea battle, all wear plumed headgear (or headgear of reeds, or with spiked hair – it is impossible to distinguish the material from the scenes). Those still able to bear arms are equipped with round shields, spears or javelins, and straight-edged swords or daggers; all wear a knee-length, banded kilt with tassels ([Figure 20.3](#)) that closely resembles kilts shown on ‘northerners’ in some Theban tombs (see [Figure 20.1](#) above: on the right). Hall (1901–1902) did not point out this similarity in his essay linking the two groups, perhaps because he focused on the plumed headgear on the aggressors portrayed at Medinet Habu. I do not agree with Hall’s argument that the Aegeans in Theban tombs and Sea Peoples are necessarily connected: Sea Peoples groups were too disparate for any long-term cohesion to be attributed to them (Cifola 1988), let alone common sartorial elements (Roberts 2009).



Figure 20.2. Map of Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean.
Prepared by R. Gareth Roberts.



Figure 20.3. Figures captioned 'Tjekker', being presented as spoils of war by Ramesses III to the Theban triad at Medinet Habu (after Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 43).
Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of

Chicago.

There are actually some distinguishing features among the members of the confederation, but they are subtle. Most notable are the headbands, which come in primarily circular- and triangular-patterned varieties (any painted identifying features are now lost). All identifiable figures associated with chariots or carts have the circular-patterned style; two of the Sea Peoples ships are crewed mainly by figures with this headband pattern and one with a triangular style (Roberts 2009: 63–66). All the figures captioned ‘*Tjekker*’ in the presentation scene mentioned above (Figure 20.3) bear traces of triangular-patterned headgear, but this should not necessarily be taken to mean that this was the distinguishing feature of that group because both circular and triangular patterns are worn by those named *Denyen* and *Peleset* in the other presentation scenes. An anthropoid coffin from Tomb 90 at Beth Shean bears both circular and triangular types (Oren 1973: 248, fig. 52.3, pl. 78), so it seems likely that such decorative elements meant different things to the Egyptians than they did to those who wore them.

Because the Egyptian images were standardised, they cannot even be taken to show that ‘northerners’ wore plumed headgear at the time of Ramesses III or earlier (an unnamed figure among many representing the Hittite king Muwatalli’s allies at the Battle of Qadesh from the Luxor Temple also has a hairstyle or headgear reminiscent of those on the plumed Sea Peoples; Rosellini 1832–44: pl. cvi; Wreszinski 1923–35, vol. II: 84). Numerous depictions of figures in ships from other Late Bronze Age contexts bear at least a superficial resemblance to those at Medinet Habu (Wachsmann 2000; Mountjoy 2005), and archaeological evidence for similar headgear has been found (Yasur-Landau 2012), so some seafarers may have worn ‘plumed’ headgear, but even at Medinet Habu the iconography is not fully consistent. A figure depicted on a plinth in the First Court at Medinet Habu is labelled ‘The foreign lands of the *Peleset* whom his person killed’; this figure is shown, however, in

different, non-plumed headgear (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. II: 118c; Wreszinski 1923–35, vol. II: 160b; Sandars 1978: 165). Unlike the presentation scenes, this example is far from the battle, where the emphasis is on multiple enemies acting together, and is in a place where the emphasis is on showing distinctiveness. Consistency need not be expected across all contexts.

Motifs of the year-eight campaign also occur elsewhere at Medinet Habu (Roberts 2009: 68). The word ‘conspiracy’ is also used in a scene depicting the year-five campaign against Libyans: ‘Coming by the *Tjehenu*, having made a conspiracy’ (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 16.1–16.4), paralleling the duplicity of foreigners recounted in the year-eight campaigns. Non-combatants are among the attackers in the year-five scenes, just as they are in the better known year-eight campaign: a Libyan woman and child are shown being assailed by Egyptian forces (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 18). The motif of Ramesses standing alone against many is also present in that year-five campaign inscription: ‘the total which is given to them is the *Libu*, the *Seped*, and the *Meshwesh*’ (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. I: pl. 16.6–16.7). This is an effective extension of the traditional motif of Egypt being indomitable in the face of numerous perceived enemies; it is encapsulated in the phrase ‘Nine Bows’ (O’Connor 1990), which was itself employed regularly at Medinet Habu.

At Medinet Habu, the king is twice shown defending the land against many: in one case, specific names were associated with groups that were perceived as coming from the west (*Libu*, *Seped* and *Meshwesh*), but the general term applied to them was *Tjehenu* because that was an ancient generic term for the people to the west of Egypt. In the other case, the specific names were associated with groups from the north (*Peleset*, *Tjeker* and so forth), but they were called ‘northerners’ because Egypt did not have such a long association with those from beyond the sea as it did with the lands to the west. When included among many inscriptions in a single mortuary temple, such duplication serves to reinforce the impression that Egypt, in the person of the

king, stood alone against the many who wished to attack it and overthrow the divinely ordained ruler. These similarities also suggest that there was an accepted canon of material that was deemed appropriate for a royal mortuary context.

The decision on how to portray foreigners, including ‘northerners’, was an Egyptian one. Those who designed the battle scenes were required to show many acting as one against an Egyptian king who stood strong and alone in the defence of his land, and they developed a motif that allowed for this within compositional constraints. Egyptian artists regularly visited tombs, and left graffiti to commemorate their visits and impressions (Hartwig 2004: 44). Thus, when the designers of Medinet Habu, who may have normally dwelt far from the Twentieth Dynasty (ca. 1196–1070 BC) royal residences and the gateway towns of the Delta, needed motifs to signify northerners, they might have had well-known models available to them in nearby Eighteenth Dynasty tombs. This parallels the elements of inscriptions from temples of Ramesses II (ca. 1290–1224 BC) and Merneptah (ca. 1224–1214 BC) that were later incorporated into texts at Medinet Habu. Earlier commentators (e.g. Edgerton and Wilson 1936: 1–2; Nelson 1943: 48–49) were critical of the seeming lack of originality on the part of Ramesses III (ca. 1194–1163 BC) and his scribes, but if these texts are examples of an accepted repertoire of mortuary inscriptions, then it need not be a failing.

The manner in which foreigners were presented at Medinet Habu indicates that the Egyptian scribes and artists (as well as the person in overall charge of the temple’s decoration) were well aware of the symbolic aspects of the commission. Both on a temple-wide basis and within individual scenes, the design shows Ramesses III defending his land against all opposition, as a good king was required to do. This symbolic aspect alone is sufficient to warrant caution when attributing ‘reality’ to the events portrayed in the narrative depicted. The Kushite, Libyan and Sea Peoples texts and scenes form part of an overall decorative scheme whose purpose is to present Ramesses as a warrior king, strong and

confident in his dealings with foreign groups, who themselves are presented in the traditional style: as subject to Egypt. At Medinet Habu, foreigners from the north provided a means for cultural reinforcement by showing Ramesses III as the Egyptian court expected him to be shown, and how he would have wished to be remembered.

Discussion: Changes and Identities

At the start of this chapter, I stated that texts and images included in Egyptian mortuary contexts were not there primarily to record historical events but to demonstrate the qualities of the person whom they commemorated. The artworks portrayed an ideal that was appropriate to the deceased, and we who research the distant past should not expect the artists to aspire to our views of historical ‘truth’. Egyptians did not have a category that corresponded to what we in the twenty-first century would consider ‘history’, and consequently modern scholars attempting to interpret ‘true’ historical detail from such scenes are likely to be arguing from false premises. With respect to the evidence discussed here, arguments have typically been about ‘what happened’, to explain why northerners from across the sea stopped bringing tribute or trade to Egypt and started bringing war. Four main arguments, and numerous variations upon them, have developed, the earliest of which predate archaeological investigation.

The first, the mass-migration model, follows an initial observation by Chabas (1873) that northerners in the Medinet Habu land battle were accompanied by dependants in carts. It holds that the northerners were migrating due to some factor or combination of factors – drought, earthquakes, displacement from their homelands – that caused them to search for new homes. The second, the destructive-wave model, developed by Chabas’s younger colleague Maspero (1875) and later elaborated by Hall (1901; 1901–1902), describes aggressive peoples whose technology or knowledge – iron-working, advanced seagoing, battle tactics – enabled them to gain a military advantage over other civilisations, conquering their way

across the Mediterranean until they were stopped by Egypt. In this model, the northerners were invading barbarians. The third, the systems-failure model, follows the likes of Betancourt (1976) and proposes that systemic collapse in the Bronze Age Aegean resulted in what might now be called failed states, creating unrest that, via a domino effect, caused disruption and destruction throughout the wider Mediterranean. This model supposes that the Late Bronze to early Iron Age period was an age of chaos, the nature of which is still unclear after 150 years of research, although dramatic names such as ‘the crisis years’ (Ward and Joukowsky 1992) or ‘the catastrophe’ (Drews 1993) or ‘collapse’ (Cline 2014) have been applied to it. The chaos supposedly created the conditions in which mass migrations or invasions could occur, so the Sea Peoples were a result, rather than a cause, of the disruption. The fourth, the economic-transformation model, has it that a change (rather than breakdown) in the economic conditions of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean system allowed those who had mastered the sea to supplant established power relationships between Great Kings (Sherratt 1994; Sherratt and Sherratt 2001). This model discards the simpler cause-and-effect explanations offered by earlier scholars for a more complex view.

I do not believe that critical analysis of the Egyptian evidence at Medinet Habu can establish the historicity of an invasion of the sort that is widely assumed, let alone an extended period of unrest. Most studies remain premised upon the idea that Ramesses III actually faced a major invasion from the north that was related to wider disruptions affecting the Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age. Ideological elements within the compositions suggest that, at best, any incursions from the north would not have occurred in the way they were shown. At worst, they might have been entirely invented as part of the display of Egyptian kingship.

I suspect that the long-held belief in the underlying story of aggressive action may be related, at least partly, to the idea that there is a recursive relationship between the

interpretation of the past and the personal experience of the scholars who study it (e.g. Bourdieu 1977 [1972]; Giddens 1979; Hodder 1991; Dornan 2002; Balbaligo 2006). More than 150 years have passed since de Rougé (1855: 14) first coined the term *peuples de la mer* (later anglicised as ‘Sea Peoples’) when discussing several groups who were given the epithet ‘of the sea’ in texts from the reigns of Merneptah and Ramesses III. De Rougé only speculated about a connection between them, but the idea that a mysterious people rose from nowhere to trouble the greatest civilisations of the era found traction, and was repeated. Successive generations of scholars have accepted, almost without question, that northern invaders sought to invade Egypt in the Late Bronze Age, and de Rougé’s speculation has become so firmly established that it is only rarely challenged (see, e.g., Cifola 1988; Silberman 1998). Most reviews of ancient Near Eastern history accept it as fact (e.g. Shaw 2000; Van De Mieroop 2007; Wilkinson 2010), mainly debating the extent of the phenomenon, while seeing the most important questions about seagoing northerners as ‘who the Sea Peoples were, where they had come from, and where they finally settled’ (Cline and O’Connor 2003: 110). If the historicity of the invasion can be questioned because of the stylistic nature of the evidence, then such questions are effectively meaningless.

The perpetuation of the belief in aggressive action within the Mediterranean may also be related to a lack of available data, and the (apparently) sudden change in the character of the surviving evidence. In Egyptian art, the northerners go from being respectful, and even fearful, of the Egyptian king to trying to supplant him, or at least assisting others in their desire to do so, with relatively little evidence of anything in between (Kemp and Merrillees 1980). Archaeologists and historians who examine evidence for the distant past can be prone to look for discontinuities. Discontinuities stand out in the record and are too often interpreted as indicating a sudden change.

In European archaeology, such interpretations largely derive from attitudes that, in the past (and still quite

common in Egyptological research), equated sudden changes as a result of a dramatic occurrence, such as migration or diffusion (e.g. Childe 1950; 1956). This model was developed and elaborated in the late nineteenth century (e.g. Ratzel 1882; see Jones 1997: 3), when the likes of Chabas, Maspero and Hall were writing. To them, battles against seafaring northerners in the reign of Ramesses III were undeniable and were evidence for a sudden and dramatic shift. When confronted with markedly different attitudes, it is tempting to find reasons for the change – to create meaning – yet the two data sets I have examined here come mainly from the reigns of Thutmose III and Ramesses III, some 280 years apart. For that whole period, seafarers from Mediterranean islands are archaeologically and textually invisible in Egypt, so although there were continued interactions between Egypt and lands to the north during this time, it is not possible to discern what changes might have occurred in the nature of those contacts. One cannot reasonably determine changes in northern attitudes towards Egypt on this basis.

One might, however, glimpse changes in Egyptian attitudes to the world around them from their art, since the artworks I have discussed here contain elements that reflect the sociocultural identities of their creators. Concepts of identity are contextual and difficult to generalise, but philosophers from Hegel onwards have argued that identities (personal or social) are formed in relation to an ‘other’. In the Egyptian Old Kingdom (ca. 2700–2150 BC), long after the unification of the country into a single political entity (the traditional interpretation of the scenes on the Narmer palette; initially Quibell 1898: pl. xiii), the nominal borders of Egypt were defined by physical features: the desert edge to the east and west (though not so extensive and inhospitable as now), the sea in the north, and the first cataract to the south at what is now Aswan. Beyond these borders dwelt others. Libyan tribes (generalised as *Tjehenu* in Egyptian sources; Kitchen 1990: 16) were scattered and nomadic and, while annoying as raiders, were not capable of posing a sustained threat to the Egyptian state. To the northeast, the city-states of the Levant were unable to

muster the resources to challenge Egypt, and other states that controlled larger swathes of territory, such as those in Mesopotamia, were so far away that military conflict was improbable. To the south, though, were established polities.

Egyptian names for these kingdoms were occasionally recorded; *Irtjet*, *Mekher*, *Tereres*, *Setju* and *Yam* are mentioned in tomb inscriptions, notably that of Harkhuf (e.g. Lichtheim 1973–80, vol. I: 23–27). Such names probably indicate that there were several polities there (Edwards 2004: 78), but it was common for Egyptians to generalise them as ‘southerners’, as they would later generalise ‘northerners’. Contacts between Egypt and its southern neighbours seem to have included both exchange and antagonism (often concurrently). During the Middle Kingdom, for example, Egyptian forces moved south and fortified settlements were established in *Wawat* – the Egyptian name for Lower Nubia, between the first and second cataracts. This period corresponds to the expansion of Kerma, a town that lay south of the third cataract (Edwards 2004: 75–98). After the last Thirteenth Dynasty (ca. 1775–1625 BC) kings at Thebes were unable or unwilling to commit to the farthest parts of the kingdom, rulers from the south assumed control of *Wawat*. There is no clear sign of a violent takeover, and at least some Egyptians in the old border settlement at Buhen claimed the ‘ruler of Kush’ (Redford 1997: 4–6, esp. nos. 15 and 16), probably Kerma, as their sovereign in following years.

This changed after the Theban kings from what are now called the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties re-established Egyptian authority along the Nile, which provided a focus for Egyptian political identity in the early New Kingdom. Kamose’s (ca. 1540–1534 BC) inscriptions, for example, state that the Nile was ‘Egyptian water’ (stela Kamose I: Helck 1975: 84, no. 119; Redford 1997: 13). In the years following Kamose’s reign, conflict between Thebes and the south was probably common. Biographical self-presentation texts from the Elkab tomb of Ahmose son of Ibana (EK5) mention southern campaigns against insurgencies (Sethe and Helck 1906–58, vol. IV: 5.4–6.15;

Van De Mierop 2011: 161); those in the tomb of Ahmose Pen-Nekhet (EK2; see Breasted 1906–1907, vol. II: §§ 17–25; 40–42; 83–85; 123–24) state that he accompanied several kings on campaign over a long military career, mentioning campaigns into Kush during the reigns of Amenhotep I (ca. 1510–1485 BC) and Thutmose II (ca. 1470–1465 BC). Passing reference to two military campaigns into the south, under two kings whose reigns were not consecutive and which were inscribed a generation or more after the events they evoke (Baines 2011: 62), need not be seen as evidence for a policy of conquering the south, but they are suggestive.

During Ahmose Pen-Nekhet's lifetime, the kingdoms to the south were effectively annexed (and perhaps aggressively depopulated; Säve-Söderbergh 1969). Fortified settlements yielding large quantities of Egyptian material culture have been discovered up to the third cataract; it is generally thought that this area was directly governed – it is from this period that the title 'King's Son of Kush' (a viceroy, not a relative of the king) is first attested – while areas beyond might have retained a degree of autonomy (Morkot 1991: 299; Van De Mierop 2011: 162–63). Kerma, as the most powerful local polity, would have borne the brunt of Egyptian aggression, and its power as an independent state had ended by (or even before) the reign of Thutmose III (Edwards 2004: 101–102; Spalinger 2006: 347). Thus, by the time the Theban tombs noted above were being constructed, the threat from the south was reduced, as it became effectively part of Egypt (Liverani 1990: 256–57). Egypt's traditional rival was no longer the 'other' it had once been, but Egyptian kings of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties continued to depict enemies in the south. Inscriptions from the eighth year of Seti I (ca. 1290–1288 BC), for example, tell of a campaign into the south because *Irem* was 'plotting rebellion' (Kitchen 1975–83, vol. I: 103.3–103.4; O'Connor 1987). This text conforms to the accepted tropes of royal presentation (Smith 2003: 202–203), and cannot be read as simply historical; indeed, a complementary text from Seti I's first year states that he conducted a campaign against *Shasu* (bedouin) in the north,

who were also ‘plotting rebellion’ (Kitchen 1975–83, vol. I: 9.3–9.4).

Egyptian control of the south probably lessened during the Twentieth Dynasty (Naunton 2010: 125), yet the region remained highly Egyptian influenced (Vincentelli 2006), and Egyptian kings began to focus more on the north. During the Second Intermediate Period (ca. 1710–1535 BC), the kings at Thebes had serious rivals in the Hyksos kings of the Delta. Following the re-establishment of authority throughout Egypt and the eviction of Hyksos rulers, numerous royal texts and reliefs show active campaigning in the north. The earliest are mentions of northern campaigns in inscriptions from the tombs of Ahmose son of Ibana and Ahmose Pen-Nekhet. These include a three-year siege of Sharuhen, probably Tell el-Farah (south), in the text of Ahmose son of Ibana cited above (Sethe and Helck 1906–58, vol. IV: 4.14; Vandersleyen 1971; Lichtheim 1973–80, vol. II: 12–15; Redford 1997: 15–16). Most early forays in the north seem to have been mainly punitive, particularly against nomads (Hasel 1998: 91, 174, 254), but larger and potentially dangerous kingdoms were also encountered there, and fear of foreign occupation is discernible in several post-Hyksos texts (Redford 1984: 16; 1992: 148).

Thutmose I seems to have campaigned vigorously, taking an army as far as the Euphrates, and thus engaging with the recently formed kingdom of Mittani. Thutmose III’s Annals claim 16 expeditions to the north which, even if they are not historical, at least shows that whoever composed them was familiar with the expectations of the Egyptian court, and realised that the north was important. Mitanni and Egypt made peace in the reign of Thutmose IV, but parts of the north continued to be sources of turmoil, notably *Amurru*, a territory within the region, whose politically active rulers Abdi-Ashirta and Aziru claimed allegiance to both Egypt and *Hatti* (Bryce 2005: 167–75) before finally settling on the Hittites. This switch probably stirred the Egyptian–Hittite conflict that culminated in the much-discussed conflict between Egypt and *Hatti* outside the city of Qadesh (e.g. Breasted 1903; Kitchen 1982: 53–62; Ockinga 1987; Healy

1993; Bryce 2005: 234–41).

The importance of the north is visible in other types of Egyptian sources. Ramesses II moved his residence (the effective capital of Egypt) to the Delta, which is thought to have been his heartland and region of origin. This was essentially an expansion of Tell el-Dab'a Avaris on the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, and it inherited that city's links to the palaces of the northern Great Kings. It also formed a conceptual barrier. A text now known as 'Praise of the Delta Residence', begins 'His person (here Merneptah) – life, prosperity and health – has built for himself a fortress and "Great-of-Victories" is its name. It separates *Djahi* from Egypt' (Papyrus Anastasi II.1; Gardiner 1937: 12–13; Caminos 1954: 37). The palace was seen by the author as a bulwark between Egypt and the north, and from this period comes the first evidence for confederations of seagoing northerners. The north became more closely associated with royal identity as the Bronze Age transitioned into the Iron Age.

Conclusions

I have argued above that a crucial motivation for art in a mortuary context was for the deceased to be presented as someone who had done what was right according to the principles of *maat*, that the ideal was more important than any single reality, and that this had been the case since the third millennium BC (Baines 2011: 65). Different levels of society had different responsibilities. Egyptian kings retained nominal control over all Egyptian resources, but they were not directly responsible for economic and administrative functions, which had devolved from royalty to the bureaucracy during the Old Kingdom (Lupo 2007: 155). Rather, in the late New Kingdom, the majority of day-to-day economic and administrative functions seem to have been conducted through temples (Janssen 1961: 98–99; 1979).

The highest-ranking temple officials were members of the high elite, and a pertinent example is Menkheperreseneb, a High Priest of Amun under Thutmose III in the Eighteenth

Dynasty, interred in Theban Tomb 86. His tomb, as discussed above, contains a tribute icon in which he is shown presenting goods from *Keftiu*, *Hatti* and *Tunip* to the king. Being high ranking, it was fitting for him to be shown assisting the king by ensuring the proper functioning of the state, in this case by managing tribute allegedly brought by properly deferent foreigners, and presumably engaging in diplomatic activity.

New Kingdom royals, on the other hand, had identities that were associated with three main roles: to be (1) a symbol of continuity with the past, (2) an intermediary between the gods and humanity, and (3) a defender of the land (Redford 1995: 160–61). The right (or even responsibility) for kings to wage war is expressed in the imagery of most New Kingdom rulers where they are shown undertaking military expeditions shortly after accession, symbolically establishing their reigns through the ideology of kingship, regardless of historicity (Assmann 2002: 247–50). Another manifestation of this ideology can be seen in images involving the ritual smiting of enemies, which symbolised both the unification of Egypt (Goebs 2007: 278–79), as well as the king asserting his right to dominate his neighbours and rivals. This was an ancient icon, famously appearing on the Narmer Palette from the thirty-first century BC (Quibell 1898: pl. xiii), but was also prominent in the reliefs of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, nearly 2000 years later (Epigraphic Survey 1930–70, vol. II: pls 101, 102). Some have argued, I believe erroneously, that such scenes showed real events enacted in temples (e.g. Schulman 1988: 49), but regardless of historical actuality, war and conquest were part of the canon of royal representation and considered proper for a king.

The two data sets I have examined here come from periods more than 250 years apart, and show different Egyptian attitudes to seafaring northerners. The first was created around 1450 BC, before the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean economic and political system had fully developed, before Egypt had fully engaged with rival territorial kingdoms in the north, and when royal identities were defined in

iconography by rivals in Africa ('Egyptian water'). Seafaring northerners were not yet part of the canon of royal representation, but instead fell within the remit of the high elite. By the time the second data set was created in the early twelfth century BC, the focus had shifted. The great rivals to the south were largely gone and assimilated into the Egyptian world. Although tradition meant that Nubians continued to be included as enemies in the iconography of kingship, they were no longer truly part of the 'other' or a serious threat. Rather, the focus of Egyptian attention had shifted north to the Mediterranean, and to lands controlled by other Great Kings. By the reign of Ramesses III, there had been around 250 years of tradition that the north held rivals who could serve as the 'other' against which Egypt, embodied by the king, could be defined. Seafaring northerners ceased to be an elite trope, and became a royal one, which reveals changing attitudes to, and the increasing importance of, the Mediterranean in Late Bronze Age Egypt.

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21 The Lure of the Artefact? The Effects of Acquiring Eastern Mediterranean Material Culture

Morag M. Kersel

Abstract

The relationship between people and things is a crucial avenue of investigation in understanding past cultures. While the social aspects of material culture have come under closer scrutiny over the past few decades, what remains largely unexplored is the correlation between collecting archaeological artefacts and the destruction of the archaeological landscape to supply that demand. Understudied also is the transformation of the archaeological entity. An examination of the social contexts and the consequences of consuming material culture is integral to a fuller understanding of archaeology in the eastern Mediterranean. The interplay of these spheres provides an intriguing lens for the examination of the lure of relics from the Bronze and Iron Ages. To be as pervasive as it is, consumption is likely to serve multiple motives and involve a variety of stakeholders, ultimately resulting in the destruction of the archaeological record. Many of the motivating factors behind the collecting of eastern Mediterranean materials echo the rationales of early archaeological practice in the region – a desire to establish a connection to the land and the past through material manifestations; and a desire to save the past. Artefacts from this part of the world have long held a fascination for pilgrims, tourists and locals, which can often be tied to a substantiation of faith based on the material past. At the same time, the archaeological artefact, once removed

from its context, acquires a new facet to its object biography – that of looted artefact. Employing case studies from Greece and Israel, this chapter examines the collecting of archaeological materials, the deleterious effects on the archaeological landscape and the object biographies of those artefacts enmeshed in the trade in antiquities.

Introduction

To be as pervasive as it is, consumption – that is, the acquisition of archaeological artefacts – is likely to serve multiple motives, and involve a variety of stakeholders. This demand for artefacts may ultimately result in the destruction of the archaeological landscape or the theft from museums. As part of my study into the effects of the trade (legal and illegal) in antiquities on the archaeological record, I established a causal relationship between the looting of archaeological sites (supply) and the consumption of archaeological artefacts (Kersel [2006a](#)). Much of the data and background research are the result of investigations conducted over a period of 10 years in Greece, Israel, Jordan and Palestine. More than 200 interviews¹ were carried out with various stakeholders involved with the illegal and legal antiquities trade (in Israel, it is legal to buy and sell artefacts in accordance with the 1978 Antiquities Law) in the east Mediterranean in order to assess the efficacy of current legislative practices in the aforementioned countries. In order to understand better the connection between supply and demand, and to comprehend the market and the desire for archaeological artefacts from the eastern Mediterranean, it is necessary to investigate the desire to collect cultural material. What motivates collectors? Why do people want archaeological material from this region? Does this practice have any bearing on the archaeological landscape? What is the lure of the artefact? Employing case studies from Greece and Israel, this chapter examines the collecting of archaeological materials, the effects on the archaeological landscape and the object biographies of those artefacts enmeshed in the trade in antiquities.

Why Collect?

At the end of the three-part artefact commodity chain (production–distribution–consumption) illustrating the trade in antiquities is consumption: someone or something (a museum, an educational institution, etc.) creating consumer demand for archaeological material. In the eastern Mediterranean, consumers can be broken down into two broadly defined categories: low end and high end. Low-end consumers are typically tourists, students and religious pilgrims to the area who want to leave with a small, rather inexpensive memento or gift of their trip. These keepsakes must meet the requirements of what Graburn (1976: 15) defines as low-cost, portable, dustable and, most importantly, understandable (see Figure 21.1 for an example of a tourist keepsake). For our purposes, these souvenirs of the trip are what Gordon (1986) refers to as ‘symbolic shorthand souvenirs’ – those artefacts manufactured in the past, which evoke a message about an associated place or person.



Figure 21.1. Example of a tourist (low-end collector) keepsake. Photograph by Morag M. Kersel.

Evocative significance is often of equal importance to the high-end collector in their desire to possess the past. High-end consumers are traditionally wealthy individuals, museums and educational institutions willing to make large

financial investments for the highest-quality pieces representative of a particular period and place. While there are some fundamental differences in the way in which low-end and high-end collectors carry out their purchases, the psychological and sociological factors affecting their acquisitions may be very similar.

According to Schwartz (2001: 633), 'collecting has existed for as long as humans could conceptualize the idea of beauty. The acquisition of a beautiful object would guarantee present and future enjoyment'. Pleasure (real or imagined) attained through owning objects is a major impetus for many collectors. These sentiments are patently evident with collectors of eastern Mediterranean material. Many of the motivating factors affecting collectors of archaeological material from the eastern Mediterranean echo the rationales for early archaeological practice in the region – a desire to establish a connection to the land and the past through the material remains. The collector often attempts to recreate the past through the purchase of artefacts and may variously view themselves as connoisseurs, heroes, public servants, saviours, tourists and harbingers of class.

By its very nature, collecting is paradoxical. Simultaneously, it is rational and irrational, deliberate and random, cooperative and competitive, passive and aggressive, stressful and calming. It can evoke thoughts of self-worth and importance while at the same time inducing feelings of inadequacy when an opportunity is missed or a competitor is more successful. Studies have posited an assortment of interrelated motivations for the general concept of collecting, ranging from the financial, psychological and sociological to the aesthetic and cultural.

Most theoretical considerations of collecting (see Rigby and Rigby 1944; Eccels 1968; Baekeland 1981; Storr 1983; Stewart 1984; Haraway 1985; Ellen 1988; Danet and Katriel 1989; Pomian 1990; Formanek 1991; Olmsted 1991; Baudrillard 1994; Clifford 1994; Muensterberger 1994; Belk 1995b; Pearce 1995; Long and Schiffman 1997; Gosden and Knowles 2001; Schwartz 2001; McIntosh and Schmeichel

2004) agree that, in the final analysis, collecting is about control. Clifford (1985: 238) suggests that the act of collecting is predicated on a particular view of owner–object relations as based on domination. The owner of the object is dominant and is imbued with power through ownership. Israelis buying artefacts looted from Palestine assert their dominance over the collective cultural legacy through authority over the downtrodden Palestinians, many of whom have resorted to looting as a means of economic survival. Simultaneously, Palestinians loot archaeological sites as a means of resistance – eradicating any presence of a tangible Jewish connection to the land (Abu el-Haj 2001; Kersel 2007). Said (1978) accuses Napoleon’s forays into Egypt and the Levant of being the quintessential model of scientific appropriation of one culture by another. Napoleon participated in what Schildkrout and Keim (1998: 30) refer to as trophy hunting in which large collections of artefacts represent a tangible means of showing conquest, domination and penetration. For the low-end collector, the act of purchasing an artefact in the marketplace can also convey dominance over travel, leaving their known comfort zones for destinations and adventures unknown. The bought antiquity signifies conquest over a distant land.

The practice of collecting has alternately been described as glorified consumerism (Danet and Katriel 1994) and the ultimate in luxury consumption (Belk 1995a). The *nouveau riche* often regard the purchase of art and antiquities as a way of gaining legitimacy and standing among the old families of the aristocracy (Muensterberger 1994). The desire for social distinction or what Moulin (1987) refers to as the ‘snob factor’ is a very important motivator for collectors. In their landmark study on Cycladic figures, Gill and Chippindale (1993: 634) discuss the snob factor: ‘Antiquities, like other works of art, are one means by which mere money, even in vulgarly acquired form, can become a fine proprietorship’. Possessing some special, generally unavailable items instils status on the self and envy in one’s associates. Collections are also a means of demonstrating or claiming high social status vis-à-vis non-collectors as well as other collectors; the distinctiveness of the collection brings

distinction to the collectors (Baudrillard 1981; Bourdieu 1984).

Collecting, then, is the essence of materialism. It involves acquiring, choosing, possessing and shopping. Collectors create, combine, classify and curate to produce collections. Clifford (1988: 218) states that collections embody hierarchies of value, exclusions and the rule-governed territories of self. The gathering of objects together in a collection makes a concrete, visible statement about the collector's personal hierarchy values. 'The great collector has a sense of destiny, a feeling that he is mankind's agent in gathering and preserving what otherwise might be heedlessly dispersed' (Meyer 1973: 187). Through objects, collectors have the ability to keep alive the collective memory of the past, which otherwise might be forgotten or wrongly interpreted (Rigby and Rigby 1944).

Whatever the motivation (psychological or sociological) and whoever the collector (low end or high end), there is little question that collecting is much more than the simple experience of pleasure. If that were true, then one ancient artefact would satisfy (which is sometimes true of the low-end collector) the collecting instinct. Why do people collect material from the eastern Mediterranean? There is a distinctly individual and often wide disparity in the incentives that motivate collectors.

Alluring Artefacts

In his work, *The Strange Life of Objects*, Maurice Rheims (1956) suggests that 'the passion for an object leads to its being construed as God's special handiwork'. This sentiment is particularly true for artefacts from the Holy Land where, according to many believers, the pieces are god's handiwork, possibly even held by Jesus. The collecting of artefacts has a long history in the region, which is often tied to the substantiation of faith based on a material past. Jews were already devoted to the region and had been for centuries, but with the spread of Christianity as an accepted religion came hordes of Christian pilgrims eager to be closer to the

Holy Spirit through relics from the Holy Land. 'Useful for both biblical contemplation and as talismans to ward off ill health and bad fortune, ancient artefacts from the Holy Land quickly became status symbols for simple Christian pilgrims and wealthy aristocrats alike' (Silberman 1989: 131).

From their origins as relic gathering by pious pilgrims, archaeological artefacts from the Holy Land have been powerful signifiers of ideological meanings and reflections of political and social relationships (Shenhav-Keller 1993: 183). Low-end and high-end collectors alike seek a concrete connection to the past, further defined through the filter of their nationality, ethnicity and religious affiliation. Archaeological material confirms an unbroken continuity, a past that cannot be separated from the present and one that conveys a powerful link to the future. Few low-end collectors come home from a vacation without something to show for it. Souvenirs are tangible evidences of travel that are often shared with family and friends, but what one really brings back are memories of experiences. As visual anthropologist Edmund Carpenter (1973: 17) so succinctly states:

The connection between symbol and things comes from the fact that the symbol – the word or picture (or artefact) – helps give the 'thing' its identity, clarity, definition. It helps convert given reality into experienced reality, and is therefore an indispensable part of all experience.

The plethora of antiquities shops is a testament to the archaeological artefact as souvenir, as an indispensable part of the tourist experience (see Figure 21.2).



Figure 21.2. Licensed antiquities shop, Old City, Jerusalem. Photograph by Morag M. Kersel.

The subsequent rise of antiquarianism led to a new secular interest in the area. The once purely religious interest in the east Mediterranean began to give way to a more down-to-earth curiosity about its artefacts, monuments, plants, people and ruins. Those on the Grand Tour collected to fill their cabinet of curiosities rather than expressly for religious reasons. Explorers avidly collected samples of Classical statuary, coins and pottery. Collecting during this period adhered to a strict canon of ‘acceptable’ mementoes, and the figurines of the Cycladic islands, which did not conform to the ‘collecting ideal’ for Greek statuary, were often disregarded as collectibles (Gill and Chippindale 1993: 602).

While not all objects were valued equally, scholarly understanding of the history of the region was for the first time independently expanded through the study of material artefacts. But this continued, albeit that changing interest in the material remains resulted in ongoing looting and the acquisition of artefacts both legally and illegally.

During the early part of the twentieth century, the relationships between archaeology, collecting and artefacts changed dramatically. The establishment of scientific archaeology, concomitantly with the establishment of new Middle Eastern states and the rise of nationalism, led to more rigorous field methods, systematic recording of finds and laws to protect and to keep objects within national boundaries. Desire for artefacts from the Holy Land continued in a similar vein, while figurines from the Cyclades became the muses for a variety of artists. The Cycladic form could be seen in the works of Brancusi, Giacometti and Hepworth, resulting in what Gill and Chippindale (1993) refer to as 'esteem for Cycladic figures'. The collecting public became increasingly interested in the prehistoric Cycladic figurine (Figure 21.3). Unfortunately, this esteem coincided with a rise in looting of archaeological sites in the region. While motivations for collecting and the protection of archaeological objects evolved through time, the perceived (real and imagined) value of these items also changed with the period, the person and the place.



Figure 21.3. Cycladic figurine replica. Photograph by Morag M. Kersel.

The Transubstantiated Object

As artefacts are collected, they undergo a series of transformations – utilitarian and metaphorical. The object manufactured in antiquity for a particular purpose becomes an archaeological artefact through its purposeful or unintended deposition in an archaeological context. Sometime later (days, years or centuries), the object is recovered through scientific archaeological excavations, through agricultural practice, through development or

through the illegal looting of a site. The artefact may then become the object of scientific inquiry, an economic commodity sold in the marketplace, a revered museum piece or a signifier of past adventures.

The value of the object can range from the symbolic, to use, to exchange (see Baudrillard 2001; Kersel 2012). The value can be mutable, transitory and evolving for the collector. In the acquisition of artefacts where money changes hands, the economic exchange itself creates value for the artefact (Appadurai 1986). No longer the utile, ubiquitous lamp for lighting a darkened room, the collected oil lamp with the menorah stamp becomes a desired item used to confirm the Jewish past. The artefact's meaning is transformed from one of function to one that is socially or ideologically based in its contemporary context. The lamp is unlikely to be again used as a lighting device, and it is now a metonym for the existence of ancient Jews in the Levant.

The one-time grave good, perhaps once part of ritual practice at the Early Bronze Age site of Kavos on the Cycladic island of Keros (Figure 21.4), is now a venerated much sought-after piece in the market, as witnessed recently by the record-breaking sale of the complete piece sold at Sotheby's auction for US\$1,022,500 (Page 2008), realising more than double the original estimate. Unlikely to be used as a grave good or ritual object again, the Cycladic figurine of the Spedos variety is now equated with wealth, class, esteem and victory in the marketplace. The purchaser, Hicham Aboutaam, stated that many people at the sale congratulated him on the purchase (Page 2008), reinforcing the trope of collector as victor. Artefacts in the marketplace carry both overt and covert meanings for the collector.



Figure 21.4. Early Bronze Age sites of Kavos and Dhaskalio, Keros, Greece. Photograph by Morag M. Kersel.

Collected artefacts may display certain symbols (such as the menorah on the oil lamp) and evoke a specific moment in time (the year zero), but the act of collecting can also change the value of such items. Value may be enhanced through contagion, where the collector establishes a magical connection to the artefact's creator or prior owner, through acquisition and handling of the item (Belk [1995b](#)). This phenomenon was evident at an antiquities auction I attended in Tel Aviv. Many of the buyers (comprised of both low-end tourists and high-end collectors, foreigners and Israeli nationals) were only interested in pieces that were from the collections of Teddy Kollek (former mayor of Jerusalem) or Moshe Dayan (military leader, member of the Israeli parliament), pieces that were enhanced with the celebrity status of former ownership by a famous Israeli. The gentleman seated in front of me bid on every item from the Teddy Kollek collection, irrespective of its condition, price or time period. Contagion allows collectors to bask in reflected glory. By purchasing a celebrated object, the collector may accrue self-benefits simply by aligning the self with the object – possessions as extended self (Baekeland [1981](#); Belk [1991](#); [1995b](#); McIntosh and Schmeichel [2004](#)), reinforcing the celebrity and snob factors associated with previous owners of artefacts and perceptions of consumers identified by Gill and Chippindale ([1993](#)) and Moulin

(1987), both discussed earlier in this chapter. Whatever type of real or perceived value of the artefact to the consumer, why shouldn't people be allowed to collect artefacts?

A Problem With Collecting

Recent studies have illustrated a causal relationship between the demand for archaeological material and the excavation (both legal and illegal) of the archaeological landscape in order to provide saleable items for the market (Smith 2005; Hollowell 2006; Kersel 2006a; Luke and Henderson 2006; Roosevelt and Luke 2006; Kersel 2007; Bajjaly 2008; Hamdani 2008; Kersel *et al.* 2008; Webb and Frankel 2009). There should be little or no doubt that the demand for artefacts leads to the destruction of the archaeological landscape, theft from museums and religious institutions and the ongoing loss of knowledge and access to the past. Webb and Frankel (2009) provide an excellent overview of the harmful consequences to the archaeological record due to the looting of a Bronze Age cemetery complex at Deneia on Cyprus. The quest for inscriptions for the museum buy-back in the Ghor es-Safi may have increased looting in the area (Kersel 2012; Politis 1994; 2002), just as the demand for a particular type of coin by a tourist in Jerusalem led to the further looting of sites in the Hebron region (Kersel 2006b). Reports have also linked the acquisition of artefacts to terrorism (Kaplan 2005; Blood Antiques 2010) and even murder – in his account of the intrigue surrounding the Sevso Treasure, journalist Peter Landesman (2001) suggests that Jozef Sumegh and two associates were murdered as a result of their involvement with the illegal unearthing of the silver hoard. Interestingly, collectors continue to decry any negative associations with the destruction of archaeological sites or the connection to terrorism, turning a blind eye to the difficult questions surrounding the object's history.

A Problem With Collectors

With the plethora of studies available linking demand for archaeological material to the destruction and theft from

sites and museums, it is clear that further research into the motivations and desires of collectors is warranted. In their groundbreaking article on the effects of looting in Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Ilan *et al.* (1989: 42) state that the bulk of antiquities sales are made to low-end souvenir buyers in Jerusalem's Old City. In their analysis of the trade of antiquities in the late 1980s in Israel, they estimated that 80% of the people entering antiquities shops were tourists, and 67% of those bought an antiquity, usually of less than \$20 in value (Ilan *et al.* 1989: 42). These statistics bear similar resemblance to today's situation in Israel. Through interviews and observations, I determined that most of the people entering antiquities shops in Israel are tourists, and a little more than half usually come away with something, a memento of their visit. Statistics on high-end purchases are much harder to gather for the region, given the secretive nature of the trade and transactions when large amounts of money are being exchanged. The purchasing power of low-end and high-end collectors of archaeological material is important to the respective economies of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The sphere of influence of these consumers is evident in the framing of legislative policies (Kersel 2008), the looting of archaeological sites and the tourism industry.

The following case studies illustrate the varied high-end collecting personae and rationales involved with the acquisition and longing for archaeological material from the eastern Mediterranean. Parallels exist in the practice of collecting, the material collected, the personal motivations and the ethically dubious methods of acquisition in each of these studies. The end result, however, is a loss of knowledge about various aspects of the past and a destruction of the archaeological landscape of the eastern Mediterranean.

Moshe Dayan, the Israel Museum and the Quest for an Israeli Past

For the better part of three decades, renowned military leader and politician Moshe Dayan (1915–81) collected

antiquities. Through purchases from antiquities dealers, gifts and his own illicit excavations, Dayan amassed some of the most astounding pieces unearthed in the Levant. He purchased artefacts and pillaged archaeological sites in the name of humanitarian interests in order to save the antiquities from destruction (M. Dayan 1978). Initially, Dayan's obsession with antiquities was related to the nascent state of Israel and justification of the state's existence.

Raz Kletter (2006) documents no less than 35 sites illegally excavated by Dayan in his voracious quest for artefacts, but the anthropoid sarcophagi of Deir el-Balah provide some of the most intriguing evidence for the consequences of an unbridled passion for collecting. Dayan was a tyrant who used his military clout, reputation as a war hero, and standing as a respected cabinet minister and later a member of the Knesset to 'persuade' archaeologists, military personnel, ordinary individuals and even 10-year-old boys (Kletter 2006) to aid in his quest for artefacts from the past. In a personal interview with archaeologist Trude Dothan, she described an almost *quid pro quo* effect of dealing with Dayan: 'He provided my excavations with access and military protection at Deir el-Balah when working in the unstable Gaza Strip. I was diplomatic about his past investigations into the area to recover anthropoid sarcophagi'. At the opening of the Dayan exhibit at the Israel Museum, Professor Dothan was the invited keynote speaker; her discussion of Dayan's unauthorised activity at the site was discreet (Silberman 1989).

From all accounts, it appears that, after 1967, Dayan moved from a collector motivated by an attachment to the land through artefacts to what Rotenstein (1997) refers to as an economist/materialist collector, one whose main ambition is to amass a collection in order to realise profits. He was a victim of what Marx (1963) and Adorno (1991) refer to as commodity fetishism. The artefacts with exchange value, as previously mentioned, were fetishised for the amount of capital they could realise upon sale. At this stage, Dayan was no longer fascinated by the figurine of the Iron II period but was single-mindedly focused on its income-

producing potential. The exchange value dominates the use value (either the original or symbolic use). Dayan's grandson describes a scene where they were examining some scarabs 'like experts evaluating the merchandise' (S. Dayan 1991: 20), reinforcing the merchant image. Kletter (2003) reports that Dayan sold surplus items from his collection to fund various aspects of his life, including his daughter's wedding. When asked by a fellow Knesset member about how an artefact bearing the label 'from the collection of Moshe Dayan' appeared in a New York town house, Dayan admitted that he sometimes sold pieces but was always careful to sign the bottom of the artefact as coming from his collection, as if absolving himself of all blame (Kletter 2003) but in fact adding value to the artefact through the celebrity or snob contagion mentioned previously. Collecting is not always about the piece but the associated meanings, a phenomenon I witnessed while at an antiquities auction in Tel Aviv. Highlighted in the auction catalogue description was the association with Moshe Dayan (Image 252 *Ancient Coins and Antiquities Catalogue* No. 30, 2003). By purchasing an item, the collector may accrue benefits simply by aligning him or herself with the Moshe Dayan collection, thereby basking in reflected glory.

Throughout his collecting history, it was assumed and verbally confirmed by Dayan that his collection would pass on his death to the Israel Museum (M. Dayan 1978), essentially the State of Israel.

At one time I was innocent enough to believe that he [Dayan] would donate it, states Yaakov Meshorer, friend of Dayan and curator at the Israel Museum. At a certain stage unofficially, he [Dayan] told me 'Let me enjoy it, and after my death it will come to the museum'. (Aarons 1982: 28)

This was corroborated in recent ethnographic interviews with archaeologists and museum professionals in Israel. 'We

allowed him to dig because we were sure that in the end all of the pieces would come to the museum' (Archaeologist 23). In the end, the artefacts did go to the museum – but with a price tag. Dayan's widow, to whom he bequeathed the antiquities, offered the entire collection to the museum after his death for US\$2 million. After much debate and discussion, a donor to the Israel Museum contributed US\$1 million of the requested amount. The rest Rachel Dayan bestowed to the museum, perhaps compelled to donate part in order to rehabilitate the reputation of the collection and the collector (Aarons 1982: 28). In his account of the controversial 1986 museum exhibition opening of *The Dayan Collection: A Man and His Land*, Silberman (1989) describes the protests and public outcry over the validation of Dayan's reprehensible practices through a state-sponsored public exhibition. Silberman (1989: 126) speculates that this incident may have served as a catalyst in examining the antiquities laws and practices of cultural heritage management in the State of Israel (further discussion in Kersel 2006a).

Debate over the practices of Dayan and the purchase of his collection still rages. Opinion is divided over the acquisition and disposition of the collection, but few in the Israel Museum are willing to discuss the issues. As part of my ongoing research project, I approached a curator at the Israel Museum about the possibility of an interview to discuss museum acquisitions and the market, but was told, *'I am sorry but I am not a specialist in this subject'* (Museum 5). In response to questions about whether the exhibit condoned the collecting style of Dayan, Martin Weyl, then director of the Israel Museum, stated 'Not at all. My job is to collect and exhibit. It's not my job to enforce the antiquities laws' (Silberman 1989: 128). This sentiment is not uncommon in the museum world, a sphere recently embroiled in various dubious artefacts acquisitions (e.g. the case of the Euphronios krater and the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and the recent artefact repatriations to Italy by the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles).

This position of the museum community, an avowal of

apoliticality, was also evident in the responses of employees at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) to the request by Palestine and Jordan to Canada to seize the Dead Sea Scrolls in 2009. On loan from Israel, the Dead Sea Scrolls displayed at the ROM were at the centre of contested ownership claims by Palestine and Jordan. Reaction to the seizure request was surprisingly consistent in its uniformity: 'I can't answer that question', said Mark Engstrom, the ROM's vice president of collections and research, when pressed for details on the Palestinian claims. 'The museum's not the right forum for a political debate', claimed Julian Siggers, the vice president of programs at the Royal Ontario Museum. At the same time, the curator of the exhibit, Risa Levitt Kohn stated, 'I am an ancient historian. I can tell you about the past'. Israel Antiquities Authority curator Hava Katz opined: 'I am an archaeologist. All we do is cultural activities'. Each in turn claiming neutrality that was above the fray of politics engulfing the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto (Kaminer 2009); each claiming a stance of scientific exceptionalism, as defined by Pollock (2008) – reinforcing the trope that collecting remains outside the messy arena of politics and law.

Most collectors, low end or high end, attempt to maintain political detachment, preferring to avoid the sticky associations with law and politics, both of which may impede their collecting forays. This is true not only of collectors of Near Eastern material but also of those who collect artefacts from Greece, as the following two case studies will illustrate.

Collecting the East – Shelby White and Leon Levy

'Two decades ago [the early 1970s], we raised our hands at an auction and became the owners of a Roman Head of a Philosopher. We bought an ancient sculpture but scarcely realized then that it would mark the beginning of a collection' (White and Levy 1990: ix). With this first purchase, the collecting odyssey that would involve thousands of dollars, initiate an archaeological publication

program, sponsor excavations and provide artefacts for museum exhibitions, as well as long-term loans, was launched. Discussing their collecting practices, White (1998: 170) states, 'as collectors we believe we are preserving and expanding knowledge of the past. We didn't think of ourselves as collectors when we bought our first antiquities'. Shelby White and Leon Levy (the latter now deceased) are consummate collectors, but are embroiled in some of the fiercest ongoing battles for the restitution of archaeological material – the Weary Herakles (recently resolved with the repatriation to Turkey of the top half of the marble sculpture owned by White and Levy) and the Icklingham Bronzes (for a detailed discussion of this and other issues surrounding the ethics of collecting cultural property, see Renfrew 2000 and Chippindale and Gill 2000). White and Levy may have 'stumbled' into collecting, but they established themselves as leading experts in the collecting world and have amassed one of the most impressive collections of archaeological material.

By their own admission, White and Levy (1990: ix) state: 'Our curiosity then led us to wonder about the civilizations and the antiquities that came before and followed that of ancient Greece'. While they began collecting with Classical art, their growing interest led them to earlier examples of Greek art, which included Cycladic figurines. However, they placed limits on their practices: 'our collection had to stop somewhere and does not include any Egyptian art' (White and Levy 1990: ix). Why? In their examination of White and Levy's collection exhibited at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gill and Chippindale (1993) suggest that White and Levy are privileging and idolising Greece over more academically logical progressions of the collection. 'The collector, like White and Levy who wishes to extend backward from a nucleus of Classical material, has a choice between a cultural continuity, which leads toward Egypt, and a geographical continuity which leads toward Cycladic' (Gill and Chippindale 1993: 648). Gill and Chippindale invoke the debate inspired by Bernal's (1987) *Black Athena* (for criticism of Bernal, see Early 1998; Lefkowitz and Rogers 1996) as influencing – consciously or subconsciously

– the collecting choices made by White and Levy. Rather than choose Egypt, a cultural continuity as espoused by Bernal (1987), White and Levy have chosen a geographical continuity or perhaps a Classical continuity and the high ideals that are associated with the birthplace of democracy.

In his introduction to the *Glories of the Past*, the Metropolitan Museum's exhibition showcasing some of White and Levy's more treasured possessions, director Philippe de Montebello (1990: vii) discusses the personal vision of White and Levy: 'They are not innocents in the game of collecting but passionate, educated, cultivated consumers who have brought together a remarkable collection in a short period of time'. White and Levy are excellent examples of collectors who exhibit some of the classic characteristics of a need for public acknowledgement of their prowess vis-à-vis their artefacts. Acceptance of one's collection into a museum exhibit, or in some instances even creating the museum from a collection, is the ultimate in legitimisation of the activity (Hughes 1987). The act of exhibiting validates both the collector and the collection by instilling an authenticity to the pieces and reaffirming the collector's intelligence and expertise.

White (1998: 172) maintains that when they buy objects, they routinely check the relevant registers (Art Loss, FBI, Interpol) to determine if the artefact they are purchasing has been reported missing, looted or stolen. Checking a register is a defence often proffered by consumers (the J. Paul Getty Museum among them) of archaeological material, but the listing of a stolen artefact does not prevent its appearance in the market and its subsequent purchase by collectors. In a recent exposé of the Greek antiquities market, the documentary *Network*, Jerome Eisenberg, director of Royal-Athena Gallery, discussing the discovery of looted items from the Corinth Museum theft in his galleries' inventory, states: 'When I was considering the purchase of these pots I checked with the FBI register and they weren't there so I bought them' (Kaspiras 2005). Later, it was discovered that the aforementioned pots were stolen from the Corinth Museum, and Eisenberg returned them to the Museum.

High-end collectors like White and Levy, dealers and museums often assert that they are concerned with the entire story of an artefact from its creation, through the previous owners, to its final resting place. But can White and Levy ever really know the complete histories of the objects in their possession? Gill and Chippindale (1993: table 15), in their analysis of the provenience of material in the *Glories of the Past* exhibit, show that of the 230 pieces in the exhibition, 94% are of unknown provenance (the archaeological find spot) using such descriptors as ‘said to be’, ‘possibly’ and ‘unknown’. By purchasing material on the art market with suspect provenance, the find spots, histories and archaeological associations of these artefacts are only speculative, never certain.

For some people, such as White and Levy, the pleasure of amassing objects is increased by knowing that the activity supports scholarship, science and art; for others, the satisfactions are entirely personal, but the results are nevertheless of public benefit (Tanselle 1998). They view themselves as caretakers of art – for when you are a collector, a caretaker is what you become (White and Levy 1990). ‘As collectors we take pride in knowing that the works of art in our collection are viewed by visitors to the museums to which we continually loan them’ (White 1998: 176). Renfrew (2000: 78) counters this sentiment by asserting that ‘museum exhibitions are merely vehicles for those who seek public recognition and esteem on the basis of their collections when these contain recently purchased unprovenienced material’, reaffirming his stance that White and Levy’s good intentions are overshadowed by the practice of purchasing artefacts with no known archaeological find spot or with a suspect object biography.

Admiration for the ‘Keros Hoard’

In the early 1960s, the Cycladic island of Keros attracted the attention of the archaeological community after Colin Renfrew, conducting research for his doctoral dissertation, noted substantial looting on the western tip of the island at the site of Kavos (Renfrew 2007). Recent reports

(Sotirakopoulou 2005; 2008; Renfrew *et al.* 2007; Papamichelakis and Renfrew 2009) suggest that illegal excavations on the island began in the 1950s, although Getz-Gentile (2008), after much study of the various artefacts thought to be part of the so-called ‘Keros Hoard’, asserts that artefacts from this region may have been appearing on the market as early as the late nineteenth century. The Keros Hoard is an extensive group of fragmented finds from the Early Cycladic phase of the Early Bronze Age, allegedly found in a single area on Keros (Sotirakopoulou 2005). The fragments, which form the hoard, are attributed to the looting of the western portion of Keros, but evidence for their recovery from a single site is sketchy, anecdotal and at best limited. The artefacts include broken pieces of folded-arm figurines, schematic figurines, obsidian blades, clay and marble vessels, most of which were purchased after their initial sale by the late Professor Hans Erlenmeyer, an active collector from the 1940s until the 1960s.

Recent discussions² with the former looters or descendants of the looters confirm many of the rumours and innuendoes surrounding the recovery of the hoard. Papamichelakis (Papamichelakis and Renfrew 2009) determined that a single merchant from Athens looking for saleable artefacts spearheaded the initial looting of the 1950s. He knew what would sell and where to look for the material, and he ‘trained’ a number of local shepherds and fishermen in the fine art of artefact recovery. It is clear that demand in Athens (national and international) for Cycladic figurines led to their illegal excavation. The desire for the marble figurines continues until today, as evidenced by Aboutaam’s recent purchase of the record-breaking figurine mentioned above.

This ongoing demand for Cycladic figurines resulted in decontextualised objects in collections (private and public), a consequence of which is a somewhat skewed interpretation of the Early Bronze Age of the region. A limited number of systematically excavated figurines and those with a verifiable object ownership history led scholars (Broodbank 2007; Whitelaw 2007) to conclude that the site on the

northern end of the island of Keros was a rich but looted cemetery. The analyses of recent excavations (2006–2008) by Colin Renfrew and an international team of researchers have produced new considerations about the site – it may in fact be the first major symbolic centre of the early Aegean (Renfrew *et al.* 2007: 108). Every object in the Special Deposit area was deliberately broken in antiquity and not found in a mortuary context, contra to earlier interpretations of the site and its material culture. During the 2007 season, a rare example of a large Cycladic figurine fragment (pelvic area) was found *in situ* and is comparable to examples in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, which have often been considered to be fakes (Gill and Chippindale 1993). Renfrew *et al.* (2007: 122) forcefully state that the fragment ‘is a find of importance for the understanding of these exceptionally large figurines. And of course it finally places beyond doubt the validity of this class of figure’. Documented evidence of a surge in the manufacture of forgeries in the 1960s and 1970s in order to meet the growing demand of the antiquities market (Doumas 1984) led to greater and increased scrutiny of the figurines in collections. With scientific excavations rather than their appearance in the antiquities market, doubts surrounding the authenticity of large Cycladic figurines are laid to rest. Grounded in fact, interpretations of the past are less dubious.

Conclusion

For whatever reason people collect archaeological material, demand for artefacts results in the looting of sites and theft from museums and private collections. Buying illegal artefacts is dependent on the consumer’s lack of interest or wilful avoidance of questions surrounding archaeological find spot and object biography. ‘From the collection of a Swiss gentleman’ or ‘from a collection in Hong Kong’, long euphemisms for a laundered artefact, should not be considered acceptable forms of object history. If collectors refused to buy these types of antiquities and if the general populace understood the concomitant irretrievable loss of

knowledge, the trade in antiquities would surely be diminished. Often the purchaser, high end or low end, is in an inauspicious predicament, lacking enough information to make an informed acquisition. Asking for provenience and assurances of good title should be second nature and should be an essential element of the ethical standards of those who trade in antiquities.

Most commentators agree that once collected – removed from their original use – artefacts are inscribed with new meanings, which reflect the innumerable views and values of auction houses, dealers, collectors, curators and middlemen, apart from their original creator's purposes. Collected artefacts, decontextualised from their original find spots, can often tell us much more about the collectors and the current collecting climate than the period from which they originate. This is, in part, the reason for examining collections and collecting.

Key to making inroads into archaeological site protection and the lessening of theft from museums is a greater understanding of collectors. In their pioneering work on goods and consumption, Douglas and Isherwood (1996 [1979]: 3) highlight the importance of demand when considering consumption: 'It is extraordinary to discover that no one knows why people want goods. Demand theory is at the very centre, even at the origin of economics as a discipline, yet 200 years of thought on the subject has little to show on the question'. Demand is central to many facets of the trade in antiquities, including a role in the ongoing destruction of the archaeological record through the looting of sites and the theft from museums to supply the market. This chapter, which has examined the consumption of artefacts from the eastern Mediterranean by low-end and high-end collectors, is only the beginning of much-needed analysis.

Notes

1 Interviews were conducted after receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Ethics Review Boards at the University of Cambridge, the University of Toronto and Brown University. Interviewees agreed to participate on condition of anonymity and were assigned aliases (i.e. archaeologist 12, collector 7 and dealer 19). Any direct quotations used in this chapter are italicised.

2 Referred to as hearsay by the authors George Papamichelakis and Colin Renfrew due to the unsystematic approach of data recovery. This differs from an archaeological ethnography, which is methodologically rigorous and vetted by an IRB ethics review board.

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22 Stone Worlds: Technologies of Rock Carving and Place-Making in Anatolian Landscapes

Ömür Harmanşah

Abstract

In this chapter, I explore practices of rock carving on the Anatolian peninsula from a diachronic perspective, with special emphasis on the Late Bronze Age and Early–Middle Iron Ages (ca. 1600–550 BC). Linking together the materiality of monuments, rock-carving technologies and issues of landscape imagination, I focus first on the commemorative rock reliefs across the Anatolian landscape, sponsored by the Hittite, Assyrian and Syro-Hittite states. Rock reliefs were carved at geologically prominent and culturally significant places such as springs, caves, sinkholes, rivers sources or along the river gorges. They constituted places for communicating with the underworld, the world of divinities and dead ancestors. I then venture into the Urartian and Paphlagonian rock-cut tomb-carving practices and Phrygian rock-cut sanctuaries of the Iron Age to argue for the broader dissemination of the idea of altering karstic landscapes for cultic and funerary purposes. I maintain that rock monuments can only be understood as always being part of a complex assemblage in the long-term history of places. Using a limited number of examples, this chapter contributes to studies of landscape and place in Mediterranean archaeology by promoting a shift of focus from macro-scale explanations of the environment to micro-scale engagement with located practices of place-making.

...the world into which we are thrown is always a *built* world ... Building, which starts from the ground up, is where the fundamental ontology of our mundane lives both begins and ends ... I intend the term *ground* both literally and nonliterally. Indeed it is because places come into being through acts of human grounding that the term possesses its literal and nonliteral senses. We know by now that the wherewithal of place does not preexist the act of building but it is created by humanity's mark – its edified sign or signature – on the landscape.

Robert Pogue Harrison, *The Dominion of the Dead* (2003: 17–18)

As a child, whenever I was quizzed about my place of origin, I used to waver momentarily. This is because I have several that are mine. Ordinarily, I end up replying Ain-el-Qabou or, more accurately, in the local pronunciation, Ain-el-Abou, though the name doesn't appear on any of my identity papers. Machrah is listed on these, a village very close to the first, but whose name is hardly ever used any more, possibly because the only road suitable for cars now turns away from Machrah and crosses the above-mentioned Ain-el-Qabou.

It is also true that this name has the advantage of corresponding to a concrete reality: *ain* is the Arabic word for 'spring', and *qabou* means 'vaulted room'. When you visit the village, you see that there actually exists a gushing spring inside a man-made cavern of sorts with a vaulted roof. On the stone

half-moon there is an ancient Greek inscription that was once deciphered by a Norwegian archaeologist: it is a biblical quote starting with 'Flow, Jordan, flow on...' The source of the Jordan River is about ten kilometers away, but in Byzantine times, these kinds of inscriptions were probably a traditional way of blessing the waters.

Amin Maalouf (Trans. Catherine Temerson), *Origins: A Memoir* (2008: 43–44)

Introduction: Springs, Rock Carving and İvriz as a Place of Deep History

At a place called İvriz, in the northern foothills of the Taurus-Bolkar Dağ massif, near the modern town of Ereğli and close to the historical route that connects Cappadocia to the Adana Plain and the Mediterranean, there is a well-known spring. The seventeenth-century Turkish geographer and traveller Katip Çelebi, also known as Hajji Khalifah, gives a detailed description of the rock relief in his *Cihannuma*, where he identifies the place as *Peygamber Pınarı* ('Spring of the Prophet'); he reports that its water and mud had healing qualities. Today, it is a pleasant and refreshing picnic spot visited by hundreds on any hot summer day. In addition to its gushing ice-cold water beneath tall walnut trees, İvriz is all the more powerful with its impressive vistas of the soaring limestone peaks and verdant valley of Ambarderesi, as well as its rock relief and ancient ruins. In antiquity, a series of rock reliefs and other monuments were carved into the living rock or raised in close proximity to each other, near the multiple mouths of the spring where fresh water pours from the rock. These monuments inscribed and re-inscribed this locality with multiple representations in text and image, grounding the place for cult activity and further animating an already eventful and geologically wondrous locale. The site is famous for its eighth-century BC

rock relief depicting Warpalawaš, ‘The King, the Hero, the Ruler’ of the regional kingdom of Tabal (Aro 1998; Hawkins 2000 [2]: 425–33) (Figures 22.1 and 22.2).



Figure 22.1. Rock relief of Warpalawaš, king of Tabal at İvriz, south-central Turkey (ca. eighth century BC). Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.



Figure 22.2. Landscape at İvriz, south-central Turkey, with the view of *Kocaburun Kayası*, the site of the rock relief in the middle. Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.

Facing south, the relief is carved on *Kocaburun Kayası*, an impressively prominent rock outcrop that extends into the space of the valley perpendicularly, long and thin. The ruler is depicted in veneration of ‘his’ Storm God Tarhunzas, and

voiced in his monumental Luwian hieroglyphic inscription (Hawkins 2000 [1.2]: 516–18):

This (is) the great Tarhunzas of Warpalawa

Š

For him let him/them put long(?)

SAHANA(?)

This (is) the image of WarpalawaŠ the
Hero...

Tiyamartus WarpalawaŠ's belo[ved?...] carved it...

In this chapter, I explore various practices of rock carving and the associated cultural practices on the Anatolian peninsula from a diachronic perspective, with special emphasis on the Late Bronze, Early and Middle Iron Ages (ca. 1600–550 BC). Looking across a variety of regional rock-carving practices in Anatolia, I aim to link together the material corpus of rock-cut monuments – such as the commemorative one of WarpalawaŠ at İvriz – with broader practices of place-making and ontologies of place. While these monuments are either ritual, funerary or commemorative in nature (or serving more than one function at a time, which is arguably the case for most of them), it is argued that rock carving should first be understood as a technology of altering ‘natural’ places and has a lot to do with issues of the construction and inscription of places as culturally meaningful, politically contested locales. Bradley (2000: 33) refers to ‘votive deposits, rock art, production sites and the relationship between the monuments and the features of the natural terrain’, and states that they should be explored more carefully by archaeologists as a new form of landscape archaeology (see also Bradley 1993; 1998). Furthermore, the act of carving into the living rock is characterised as a direct encounter between cultural practices and the geomorphology of the terrain, which always provokes human imagination and storytelling in the most unexpected ways (for related ethnographic work, see, e.g., Sikkink and Choque 1999; Cruikshank 2005). Rock carving, therefore, goes contrary to

the compartmentalisation of landscapes into ‘natural’, ‘man-made’ and imagined components – it is all about the hybridisation of the three.

The monuments of concern here range from Hittite and post-Hittite (especially Syro-Hittite/Luwian and Assyrian) commemorative rock reliefs to Urartian, Phrygian and Paphlagonian practices of carving the living rock for cultic, commemorative and funerary purposes. Within the limits of this study, my intention is not to present a comprehensive survey or classification of such monuments. Instead, I emphasise the diachronic continuities (and discontinuities) in rock-cutting practices, assuming we can understand rock cutting as a cross-cultural technology of place-making in Anatolian landscapes. Especially within the karstic limestone geologies of the peninsula, I suggest that the heterogeneous practices of carving and inhabiting the rock are closely associated local, place-specific practices in long-term history. The making of such landscapes across the Anatolian peninsula can only be understood by drawing links between societies of different ethno-linguistic affiliations and emergent cultural identities.

The chapter also critiques the specialised art historical and epigraphic approaches to rock reliefs and rock-cut structures, which portray them as stand-alone monuments and show a certain disregard for their micro-geographical context. I argue that rock monuments can only be understood, always, as part of a complex assemblage in the long-term history of places. Within the last century, the archaeological richness and complexity of İvriz was slowly revealed through the discovery of new reliefs and rock features, documentation of an associated fortress and monumental buildings, and the excavation of a stele (Messerschmidt 1900–1906: 142–43, 320–23, table 34; Gelb 1939: 31 and pl. 46; Bier 1976; Rossner 1988: 103–15; Şahin 1999; on the bilingual Iron Age stele, Dinçol 1994; for a recent archaeological assessment of the area, Karauğuz and Kunt 2006). Immediately to the south of the main rock relief, archaeologists excavated a massive statue head and a fragmentary stele of the weather god with a bilingual

Phoenician and Luwian inscription (Dinçol 1994). Slightly farther south, about 110 m from the major rock relief and on the very top of a rocky spur, is a small relief of a suppliant bringing a sacrificial animal, along with a series of stepped rock cuttings, and an offering platform (Bier 1976). Even in the absence of systematic archaeological work at İvriz, these finds alone suggest that in the 400–500 years following the fall of the Hittite Empire, the site continued to be an intensively used spring sanctuary.

From Site to Complex Landscape

Early in the twentieth century, along the now-dry river bed of Ambarderesi or Karanlıkdere, about one km from the well-known relief of Warpalawaṣ, an almost identical rock relief was located. In order to get to this relief, one has to climb the steep saddle south of Warpalawaṣ's relief in the slopes of the impressive Mt. Aydos. Climbing in the river bed of Ambarderesi, one enters a very narrow canyon, which used to be the other branch of the İvriz spring before its waters were diverted for a recent dam project. Halfway into this very steep and narrow gorge, one arrives at an area punctuated by a series of large caves. Two Late Antique/Byzantine monasteries (locally known as *Oğlanlar Sarayı* and *Kızlar Sarayı*) are constructed with mortared rubble masonry, right at the point where the canyon makes a sharp dog-leg turn. Facing northeast, one finds the second Warpalawaṣ relief, an approximate but unfortunately badly weathered copy of the original presenting the same composition, only without the inscription and with certain minor differences in detail (Figure 22.3). This relief was noticed by E. Herzfeld in 1905 (Messerschmidt 1900–1906: 335–36) and visited by Gertrude Bell in 1907 (Barnett 1983: 73; Karauğuz and Kunt 2006: 29–30, nn. 23–27).



Figure 22.3. Second rock relief of Warpalawaš, king of Tabal at İvriz, Turkey, Ambarderesi valley. Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.

This rare practice of carving the same composition at another important locale deserves close scrutiny through new fieldwork in order to address issues of re-inscription and associated site-specific practices. Finally, and most recently, on the high saddle that separates the two valleys, İvriz and Ambarderesi, archaeologists Karauğuz and Kunt (2006) surveyed the remains of a sizeable ancient fortress, for which they provided a possible, Late Iron Age date of 750–300 BC. The fortress seems to have seen continued use in the late antique and Seljuk periods.

Although often construed as a single rock relief in traditional art historical and philological scholarship, the site of İvriz embeds a complex landscape, a locale of deep history, a place of memory and imagination similar to Maalouf's Ain-el-Qabou. It is not a unique example: every single one of the Late Bronze and early Iron Age rock monuments I have visited or studied appears to have existed within an intricate web of geological and archaeological features that unquestionably testify to long-term engagements of heterogeneous nature with places.

Perhaps two of the most fascinating examples of multiple inscriptions of place in the form of rock-cut images and monumental inscriptions over a long period of time in the

Near East are the sites of Nahr al-Kalb in Lebanon and Bīsōtūn in Iran. At Nahr al-Kalb, 22 recorded inscriptions and reliefs were carved at the site, starting with one commemorating the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramesses II (ca. 1270 BC), right next to numerous monuments of the Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian rulers (Volk 2008). The practice of carving reliefs and inscriptions was continued by the Mamluk Sultan Barquq in the fourteenth century AD, by Napoleon Bonaparte III in 1860–61 and by Lebanese president Alfred Naqqash in 1942. At Bīsōtūn, the famous Achaemenid-Persian relief of Darius I was later accompanied by Seleukid Herakles and Arsacid reliefs of military victory (Canepa 2010).

Rock carvings and their monumental inscriptions form only one component of a constellation of material features and residues that make up the places of long-term cultural practice in which they exist. This study approaches sites of this nature, where place-making practices by a variety of cultural groups in ancient Anatolia intimately engaged with the bedrock of places and left durable marks or shaped them within the social contexts of ritual, funerary and commemorative events and practices.

Karst Landscapes, Rock Carving and the Long Term

The middle and western Taurus Mountains, the southern parts of central Anatolia and some in the southeast feature karstic landscapes composed of Mesozoic and Tertiary limestones (Atalay 1998). These landscapes carry a wealth of ‘...karstic features such as karrens, dissolution dolines, collapse dolines, blind valleys, karstic springs, swallow holes, caves, unroofed caves, natural bridges, gorges and poljes’ (Doğan and Özel 2005). Karstic aquifers and other features that involve moving water, gushing springs and disappearing streams always provoked the imagination of local communities in antiquity; they were believed to connect the everyday world physically to the underground

world (of the dead, the ancestors), thereby inviting and stimulating the inscription of such sites (Gordon 1967). Such meaningful interaction with the mineral world transforms eventful places into dynamic sites where geological and cultural processes are entangled in the long term.

The assumption here is that a spring is already an eventful place by virtue not only of the geological spectacle of water pouring out of the bedrock but also of the very basic human engagement in securing drinking water; this water is often regarded as sacred and healing, as it was at İvriz (Håland 2009). The frequently visited sacred places at springs, caves and sinkholes take on distinct social associations and highly specific cultural significance through sustained practices in the landscape, thus becoming sites of concentrated local knowledge and social memory (Boivin and Owoc 2004). When local bodies of knowledge are involved in exploring the stratified history and the significance of places, it is intriguing that geological formations themselves appear as actors (Cruikshank 2005: 1), or as animate beings – e.g. the mountains, rivers, springs, rock outcrops and ‘eternal peaks’ in Hittite Anatolia (Bryce 2002: 135).

From a long-term regional perspective, practices of rock carving offer substantial evidence for continuity across the Anatolian peninsula during the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. As argued in detail below, rock reliefs, inscriptions and other kinds of rock-cut monuments were always built at various geologically distinct locales: springs, caves, steep river gorges, sinkholes and rocky mountain peaks and passes – which by definition are places of sustained social practices. With respect to the early Iron Age, Syro-Hittite and Assyrian rock reliefs and inscriptions, as well as Phrygian rock-cut sanctuaries, we are on safe ground to suggest an Iron Age inheritance of Late Bronze Age technologies of inscribing rocky places with commemorative monuments.

Uartian, Paphlagonian and southern Anatolian rock-cut tomb carving provides another distinct yet related practice and relates to the broader dissemination of the idea of altering karstic landscapes for cultic and funerary purposes. The practice of embedding these rock locations with

rupestral monuments to dead ancestors and local divinities is maintained right through the Hellenistic and Roman periods, even into late antiquity. The next section offers some critical insight into the particularities of such practices in their regional context and seeks to link them to the longer-term landscape imagination in ancient Anatolia. The discussion is intended to contribute to studies of landscape and place in Mediterranean archaeology by promoting a shift of focus from macro-scale explanations of the environment to micro-scale engagement with located practices of place-making. At the same time, it advocates further empirical research on places, to address the ontological nature of places rather than limiting ourselves to issues of representation and symbolism (Merrifield 1993).

Inscribed Landscapes

Hittite and early Iron Age rock reliefs in Anatolia are often seen to be politically motivated monuments that deliberately marked or guarded the territorial borders or important highways of antiquity (mountain passes, river valleys, etc.; see, e.g., Bonatz 2007; Seeher 2009; Glatz 2009 for important recent contributions). This standard commemorative reading of the monuments as imperial interventions to landscape derives from the long tradition of locating, ‘discovering’ and ‘deciphering’ these monuments – especially from the nineteenth century onwards – by renown travellers, antiquarians and Classical epigraphers of the last two centuries (most prominently in the late nineteenth century; Hirschfeld 1887). Such epigraphic and art historical studies of rock reliefs and extra-urban monuments have been instrumental for imagining ancient landscapes.

Reconstructing the historical geography of the Hittite Empire and the Iron Age polities of the Anatolian peninsula benefitted tremendously from ‘reading’ these firmly located monuments with inscriptions and images. Consider, for instance, the recent debate over the geographical definition of Tarhuntašša and the Hulaya River Land provoked by the discovery and publication of the rock relief at Hatip at an abundant spring near modern Konya (Bahar 1998; 2005;

Dinçol 1998a; 1998b; for speculations on the geography of Tahuntašša in the light of landscape monuments, see Dinçol *et al.* 2000; Karauğuz 2005; Melchert 2007). In these debates, this commemorative monument of Kurunta, king of Tarhuntašša, became a boundary marker of sorts between that Mediterranean kingdom and the Hittite ‘Lower Land’. By virtue of their subject matter and the inscriptions permanently carved onto the living rock, such reliefs are seen as authentic sites to which ancient political geographies can be anchored.

The relationship of Hittite monuments and geography – especially in south-central Turkey – has thus been a major scholarly concern (Hawkins 1995: 49–65; see also Gordon 1967). In the case of lengthy royal inscriptions such as those in Hieroglyphic Luwian at the Yalburt Sacred Pool complex or in Hattuša’s Südburg, where many place names are recorded, the debate over the political geography is even more complex and heated. Shafer (1998) similarly explores Neo-Assyrian ‘border’ steles and rock reliefs as monuments that defined the periphery of the empire.

This methodology and the historical conceptualisation of rock reliefs and other extra-urban monuments have a number of limitations. First and foremost, the specific scholarly obsession with the internal elements of the monuments – e.g. dating, composition, iconography and philological content – led to the relative neglect of the specific locales, the micro-landscapes, the places in which such monuments serving collective memory are carved or set up. Notable exceptions to this trend are Ehringhaus’s (2005) volume on Hittite rock reliefs (with excellent photographs of the landscape) and Schachner’s recent survey of Source of the Tigris (Birklinçay) monuments in their geoarchaeological context (Schachner *et al.* 2009). By advocating an archaeology of place and place-making, I propose that it would be possible to get a contextualised and balanced understanding of these monuments as places where specific practices are exercised and as places with active roles in the everyday life of the local communities.

Second, a sharp contrast is usually assumed between these

explicitly political commemorative monuments of the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages vis-à-vis the more funerary nature of Urartian, Paphlagonian and south Anatolian rock-cut architecture of later periods (Middle Iron Age to Late Roman); in turn, Phrygian rock-cut architecture is heavily associated with cult rituals. This implies a discontinuity in the nature of human engagements with the living rock. My intention here is to show that the evidence is far more complex. On the one hand, we see continuity in the commemorative and broadly politicised nature of rock carving in Anatolia; on the other hand, Hittitologists are increasingly convinced of the possible funerary functions of Hittite rock reliefs. I attempt to unpack these two issues below.

During the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages, ‘landscape monuments’ of the Anatolian peninsula often feature monumental inscriptions sponsored by a variety of regional powers, including the Hittite state and various Anatolian vassal states of the Late Bronze Age, and the Assyrian empire and the Syro-Hittite regional states in the Iron Age. I borrow the term ‘landscape monuments’ from Glatz (2009), with reference to Hittite rock reliefs, spring monuments, dams and quarries (see also Kohlmeyer 1983; Ehringhaus 2005; Bonatz 2007; Seeher 2009). In Anatolian and Near Eastern archaeology, Hittite rock reliefs are almost never discussed in relation to similar monuments dated to the Iron Age, even though there are strong indications for the uninterrupted continuity of the practice from the Late Bronze into the early Iron Age.

Many of the well-known rock reliefs were carved at liminal mountainous locations, overwhelmingly at geologically prominent and culturally significant places outside the cities – e.g. at springs and river sources, along the river gorges or on prominent rock outcrops. There are many instances where rock monuments also appear in urban contexts – e.g. at Boğazköy/Hattuša, Gavurkalesi and Kızıldağ. These reliefs and monuments created places of unusual human interaction, particularly places for communicating with the underworld, the ‘other worlds’ of divinities and dead

ancestors. Hittitologists have recently pointed out a possible association of such monuments with a number of expressions in Hittite texts, especially in Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions, as well as in treaties and ritual texts. ‘Eternal Peak’ (NA4.HEKUR.SAG.UŠ) in the Hittite texts, for instance, is understood as a commemorative rock-cut monument (such as Nişantaş at Boğazköy), a memorial posthumously dedicated to a royal ancestor but not necessarily comprising a burial (Taracha 2009: 134; see also Van den Hout 2002: 74–75; on the etymology of *hekur*, see Puhvel 1991: 287–89). *Rock-hekur* has also been translated as ‘rock sanctuary’ and associated with sites such as Yazılıkaya (Puhvel 1991: 287; it is often compared to ‘Divine Stone House’ [É.NA4 DINGIR.LIM] or the *hesti*-house, both clearly associated with funerary installations; Hawkins 1998: 71).

There are a series of Imperial Hittite rock reliefs found along the Zamantı Su valley in the province of Kayseri in southeast-central Anatolia. Among these, the well-known rock relief at Fırahtın is carved on a volcanic bedrock façade, immediately above one of the tributaries of Zamantı Su; it overlooks a very green plain, has a spectacular view of the Erciyes Mountain and is immediately below an ignimbrite pumice-flow platform (Figure 22.4). Walking on the bedrock plateau immediately above the relief, one comes across several cup marks and circular basins, related to extensive quarrying activity. Only a few hundred metres northeast of the relief, there is a prominent rock promontory where one sees a dense artefact cluster and surface remains of a monumental building, at least 30 × 28 m in size. Cup marks and circular basins also cluster near this building. The thirteenth-century BC Hittite relief itself depicts the Hittite king Hattušili III and Puduhepa pouring libations in front of the Storm God Tarhunzas and the seated Hapat respectively. The hieroglyphic inscription identifies all of them by name, and Puduhepa is singled out as the ‘great queen, daughter of Kizzuwatna, having become god’, a well-known Hittite euphemism for being deceased. Similar associations of various rock-relief monuments of the Hittites may suggest that at least some of them could be associated with the ‘Eternal Peak’ (NA4.HEKUR.SAG.UŠ) or the ‘Divine Stone

House' (É.NA4 DINGIR.LIM), monuments to dead royal ancestors. These were not simply tombs or commemorative monuments but 'large self-supporting institutions employing cultic, administrative and other personnel, and mostly enjoying some kind of tax exemption' (Van den Hout 2002: 91).



Figure 22.4. Hittite rock relief at Fıraktın on the Zamantı Su river basin near Develi (Kayseri Province). Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.

Rock reliefs and rock-cut monuments are commemorative in their often overtly political disposition: embedded in the geological temporality of the living rock, they act as a means of naturalising state power. While they attempt to construct territories of power, they connect political spectacles with the supernatural world of ancestors and cultivate grounds for everyday ritual practice, funerary or otherwise. While they appropriate existing local and located practices, geological wonders and symbolically charged landscapes into state discourse, they intervene in everyday practices that constitute the ontologies of place and processes of place-making. Those place ontologies and processes both involve discursive, programmatic interventions, directed inscriptions of place as well as residual assemblages and archaeological depositions that constitute localities of human *practice* and *dwelling*.

If rock reliefs can be considered as temporally specific and

spatially situated inscriptions of place, they are thus constituted by hybrid temporalities: durable and long-term by virtue of their incorporation into geological processes, and spectacular and animating for the long-term maintenance of site-specific practices. The inscriptional practices involve the embedding of state narratives in the form of formulaic, discursive and annalistic texts as well as pictorial statements. Once they become entrenched in the bedrock of place, the materiality of the rock reliefs, their political and cultural significance, and their agency over the culture of place do not remain inert but evolve with the landscape in which they exist. Today, as modified geologies and cultural landscapes of antiquity, they link contemporary communities with the past through their poetic and mysterious aura as ruins, and the spectacle of their antiquity. Because they speak so concretely to the genealogies of locales, whichever way they are understood and interpreted, they evoke and provoke cultural imagination and take part in the collective memory and shared senses of belonging to a place.

The rock reliefs set up in the frontiers of the Assyrian empire during the Iron Age are excellent examples of such blending of political ideologies, local cult practices and the colonial appropriation of culturally meaningful places. During their military campaigns, a series of Assyrian rulers carved their images and inscriptions on the walls of two caves at the source of Birkleyn Çay in the Korha Mountain, near the modern town of Lice in southeastern Turkey (Harmanşah 2007; see also Schachner *et al.* 2009; Shafer 1998: 182–88). The site and the monuments, known in Assyriological circles as the ‘Source of the Tigris’ or the ‘Tigris Tunnel’, were visited repeatedly by the Assyrian kings and their army (Figures 22.5–22.7). Based on Assyrian annalistic texts and pictorial representations of the event such as those on the Balawat Gate bronze bands, the carving of the images into the living rock seems to have been part of a series of commemorative and ritual activities at this sacred spot, including animal sacrifices, celebration banquets, the washing and raising of Aššur’s weapons, and the Assyrian king’s reception of tributes and offerings.¹ Judging from the

textual, pictorial and archaeological evidence, it is possible to argue that the Birkleyn caves were already a place of cultic significance and political contestation as a symbolic landscape even prior to the carving of the rock reliefs. Elsewhere I have argued that Assyrians were appropriating a local Hurrian/Anatolian practice of venerating DINGIR.KAŠKAL.KUR, 'The Divine Road of the Earth', associated with entrances to the underworld (Harmanşah 2007; on the ritual significance of Assyrian rock reliefs in general, see Shafer 2007).



Figure 22.5. 'Source of the Tigris' or 'Tigris Tunnel' site, Cave I entrance. Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.



Figure 22.6. ‘Source of the Tigris’ or ‘Tigris Tunnel’ site, Birkleyn Çay gorge. Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.



Figure 22.7. Relief image of Tiglath-pileser I on the Tigris Tunnel (Cave I) walls, with Tigris 1 cuneiform inscription to his left. Photograph by Ömür Harmanşah.

Assyrian rock reliefs in other frontier landscapes similarly adopt novel geological and locally sacred spots. Another excellent example is the site of Karabur where Taşyürek (1975) located four Neo-Assyrian reliefs (Figures 22.8 and 22.9). Karabur is a granite outcropping with conical bodies of bedrock about 25 km southeast of Antakya near the village of Çatbaşı (Karsabul). On the granite bedrock, Taşyürek (1979: 47) identified four distinct reliefs of divine and royal beings with no apparent coherent order in relation to each other, although he suggested the possibility of understanding the site as ‘an open air sanctuary’. What is fascinating here is the gathering of other archaeological features and the contemporary significance of the place, beautifully described by Taşyürek (1975: 174):

The importance of this monument lies not only with the Assyrian reliefs but also in a tradition of sanctity which even today attaches to the spot. As at Ferhatlı, the outer parts of the locality were used as a necropolis in Roman times. A rock-cut burial chamber of a characteristic Cilician type on the southern edge of the area

suggested the possibility of the presence of further tombs, and in fact some questioning soon served to locate many other Roman graves. Another point of interest is a wall, probably Roman, found c. 100 m. north of the area of the reliefs at a spot surrounded by fir trees. The villagers of Çatbaşı, who speak Arabic as their mother-tongue and belong to the Alawite sect, regard this as a place of pilgrimage and name it Seyh ul Kal'a ('Sheikh of the Fortress'). Around the Roman wall, which they regard as a tomb, and where on certain religious days they burn various kinds of incense, there are stones in the shape of orthostats, and about 7 m. to the north, there is an undamaged marble pool, probably also of the Roman period.

This rich multi-temporal engagement with rock-relief sites during the subsequent periods of antiquity is evident in the very material corpus of the place. The new meanings and associations linked to the rock monuments among the ancient medieval and contemporary inhabitants of the locales is a fairly common aspect of rock reliefs usually ignored in contemporary scholarship. The Late Bronze and Iron Age rock-cut monuments often drew Hellenistic graffiti, Roman quarries and rock-cut cemeteries, as well as Byzantine monastic establishments to the place; these associations are significant in arguing for the continuity of rock-carving practices on the Anatolian peninsula and for the cultural biography of places.



Figure 22.8. The site of Karabur with Neo-Assyrian rock reliefs near Antakya. Photograph courtesy of Elif Denel.

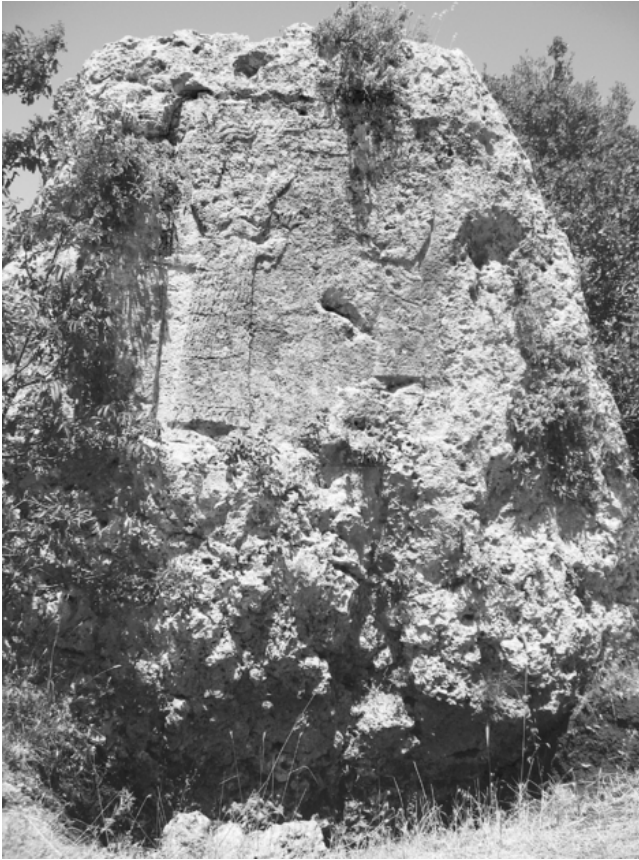


Figure 22.9. Karabur Neo-Assyrian rock relief near Antakya. Photograph courtesy of Elif Denel.

The Rocks of Phrygian Matar

Cult places associated with Phrygian deities, specifically the rock-cut monuments linked with the cult of Matar, have recently been subject to much archaeological work.² Roller (2009: 1–2) notes that there is substantial evidence for the existence of deities other than the well-known Matar, usually referred to as the Phrygian ‘Mother’, but she is cautious to associate all rock-cut sanctuaries with Matar (see also Berndt-Ersöz 2006: 170–72 who suggested evidence for ‘the Male Superior God’).

Phrygian rock-cut monuments cluster in and around the

Phrygian highlands bordered by the modern towns of Eskişehir, Kütahya and Afyon: this is a mountainous and verdant landscape whose valleys are watered by the meandering Sakarya (Sangarius) River and its tributary Porsuk (Tembris) around Türkmen Dağ. It is a region of (Tertiary Period) volcanic tuff resulting in high perpendicular outcrops of soft, easily workable bedrock, and valleys with rich alluvial soils such as the archaeologically well-known Göynüş (Köhnüş) valley. It is frequently pointed out that Matar's association with mountains and rocky landscapes may be evident in her epithet '*kubileya*', suggested to denote 'a natural feature of the landscape, probably a mountain' or a specific mountain (Roller 1999: 68; Berndt-Ersöz 2006: 83; Işık 2008: 40–47, with refs.). The epithet *kubileya* appears twice: once on a step monument in the Köhnüş valley in the Phrygian highlands (Berndt-Ersöz 2006: cat. no. 56; Brixhe and Lejeune 1984: inscription W-04), and once on an inscription right next to a triangular rock-cut niche at Germanos (Soğukçam)/Türbe Önü-Yazılıkaya, 26 km south of Göynük in Bithynia (Berndt-Ersöz 2006: cat. no. 40; Brixhe and Lejeune 1984: inscription B-01). Vassileva (2001: 53) points out that: 'according to one linguistic hypothesis, *matar kubileya* of these Old Phrygian inscriptions is an exact equation of *meter oreia*, i.e. the epithet had not been derived from the name of a certain mountain, but just from the word for *mountain* – her privileged dwelling'. In consultation with Old Phrygian as well as Greek literary and archaeological evidence, Vassileva (2001: 53, with ref. to Zgusta 1982: 171–72) has aptly summarised this association: 'Kybele is the mountain that bears a cave, either natural or artificial'.

Phrygian rock-cut monuments are usually discussed as open-air sanctuaries involving cult façades and niches, stepped monuments with thrones, aniconic idols and altars, and sometimes even tombs and wine presses (Haspels 1971). Yet, our knowledge of the function and meaning of these monuments, features and sites is relatively meagre despite the growing amount of archaeological work on them (for various readings of the monuments, see Vassileva 2001; Berndt-Ersöz 2009: 11, 143–205). The great majority of the

monuments are uninscribed and aniconic, especially those dated to the early Iron Age, whereas only with the Middle Phrygian period (800–550 BC) do we begin to see inscribed monuments and figurative representations of Matar (Berndt-Ersöz 2006: 142). The choice of rocky landscapes and hilltops, locations with impressive vistas, and the environs of springs and rivers for these monuments suggest that this was a ubiquitous place-making practice in extra-urban contexts in Phrygian Anatolia at this time.

The three major rock-cut Phrygian sites – Dümrek, Fındık and Midas City (Yazılıkaya) – offer a complex variety of rock façades with niches and step monuments with culminating thrones or crescent-shaped discs as backrests. Among these, the evidence for cultic activity at Dümrek, 40 km northwest of Gordion and overlooking the Sakarya River, is considered the earliest, because of its overwhelming Early Phrygian pottery assemblage (Grave *et al.* 2005; Berndt-Ersöz 2009: 12). At Dümrek, on the one hand, one finds a fascinating clustering of about 15 rock-cut step monuments of various sizes (Berndt-Ersöz 2006: cat. nos. 101–107). On the other hand, Midas City as a sacred landscape offers a wealth of elaborately carved rock-cut façades, such as the so-called Midas Monument (Figure 22.10), the Areyastis Monument (Hasan Bey Kaya) or the ‘Broken Monument’.

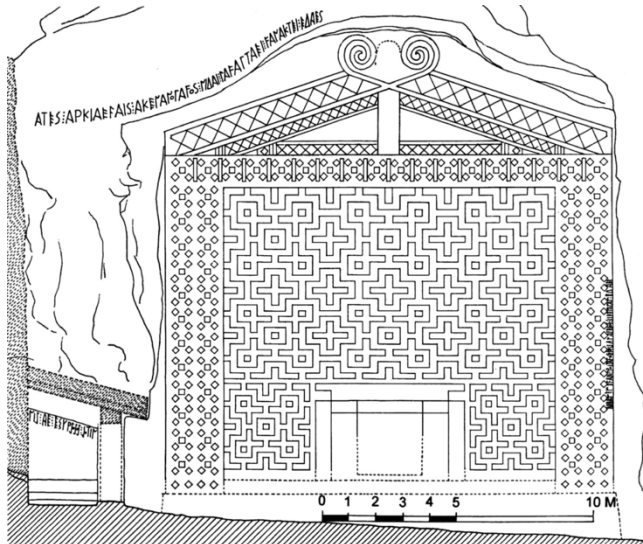


Figure 22.10. Phrygian ‘Midas Monument’ at Yazılıkaya/ Midas City, from Berndt-Ersöz (2006: fig. 50).

The designs are composed of an architectural façade with a pediment and *acroteria*, a framed surface reminiscent of a substantial post-and-lintel system, a central door-like niche and dazzling geometric patterns on all surfaces. Many of the façades have flattened, semi-enclosed, open-air platforms and subsidiary architectural spaces in front of them, possibly for specific ritual gatherings. Certain rock-cut monuments of the façade type, located in different valleys, have associated with them deep vertical shafts descending from the top surface of the bedrock behind the façade, and connecting horizontally to the niche in the bottom through a small window opening. Some scholars have associated the shaft monuments with oracular activities and communication with the world of ancestors (Özkaya 1997; Berndt-Ersöz 1998). The shaft monuments are rather broadly distributed and built away from each other: Maltaş in the Göynüş valley, Bakşeyiş/Bahşış Monument in Kümbet Valley, Değirmen Yeri in Karababa Valley, Delikli Taş near Tavşanlı and Fındık Asar Kaya northeast of Kütahya.

The political aspect of rock carving is apparent at sites such as Midas city where several monumental rock-cut façades with spectacular architectural designs and iconographic language suggest Phrygian royal patronage. Rock-cut monuments are particularly powerful tools for political elites to appropriate and colonise sacred landscapes and holy places. Spectacular, almost dazzling designs of the Midas city monuments carved into the living rock at previously venerated sites of Matar’s divine epiphany bring political power and local cult practices together for the negotiation of cultural meanings and symbolisms of a place. Political discourse here uses ‘nature’ (specifically the bedrock that is holy to Matar) as a grounding of place, in a way perhaps annihilating traces of previous micro-practices. One has to be cautious, however, in seeing the cult(s) of Matar as a unifying, state-sponsored deity of politically (read ‘artificially’) elevated status, similar to the Assyrian ‘Aššur’

or Urartian ‘Haldi’, as there is little or no evidence to make such a suggestion (contra Roller 2009: 8, who writes ‘the patronage of the goddess by Phrygian rulers in the first half of the first millennium BC gave the Mother unusual prominence as a symbol of Phrygian culture...’).

Rock-cut tombs are not unknown in Phrygia either, although oddly enough they seem to be excluded consistently from the study of Phrygian rock-cut monuments (e.g. Berndt-Ersöz 2006: 152–57). Finely decorated tomb monuments such as Aslantaş and Yılan Taş in the Göynüş valley are built facing the Göynüş Kale Fortress and in close association with other rock-cut monuments such as façades, cult niches, step monuments and smaller rock-cut tombs (see Berndt-Ersöz 2006: fig. 5 for a map of the Göynüş valley). The Aslantaş tomb is protected by ferocious rampant and couchant lions arranged on the tomb façade in relief around a central flat ‘pillar’ (Johnson 2010: 227–28). The nearby shaft monument and elaborately carved façade known as Maltaş, to the south of the two monumental tombs, was built immediately above a spring (Berndt-Ersöz 2006: cat. no. 24, fig. 33; Johnson 2010: 230–31). The Maltaş monument has an inscription under the lintel of its doorway that reads ‘[s/he] dedicated [the ritual façade] to Pormates/Mater’ (*e[daespormaptēy]*) (Johnson 2010: 231; Brixhe and Lejeune 1984: 47–49, no. W-05 a, b). Such a gathering of rock-cut features with various functions and a multiplicity of designs presents a complex landscape that cannot simply be explained with one practice or another. It is only possible to understand the place as a complex assemblage of rock-cutting practices that share a common semantic field associated with the cult of Matar, the creation and articulation of thresholds to the underworld and the world of the ancestors, and the powerful significations associated with the act of carving the living rock.

The continuity of the cult of Matar in the Late Iron Age, Hellenistic and Roman periods in the Phrygian highlands, at least at certain sites, is particularly important. At sites such as Kapıkaya near Pergamum, at Aizonai and at the Angdistis

sanctuary in Midas City itself, the ritual practices associated with the Phrygian Matar seem to have been active; they had a special revival in the later first and second centuries AD, evident in multiple votive dedications and their associated inscriptions (Roller 2009: 6–7). Monumental rock-cut tombs with columnar and pedimented façades – such as the Gerdek Kaya monument in the Yazılıkaya-Midas Valley or the Kilise Mevkii tomb southwest of Eskişehir – continued to be built in Phrygia, particularly during the Hellenistic period, and were possibly affiliated with the Paphlagonian rock-cut tombs of the Achaemenid period (Tüfekçi Sivas and Sivas 2007: 58–60).

A common scholarly mistake about rock-cut monuments is the tendency to isolate each one as a solitary structure with a clearly definable, single and unchanging function and meaning associated with it. Such an approach typically fails to grasp the monument in its spatially and temporally situated, site-specific, historically nuanced context in relation to what is adjacent to it. As Vassileva (2001: 55) perceptively discussed, rock-cut landscapes are composed of complex places where several carved features and other structures are intimately linked through specific rituals, processions and a complex set of procedures involving the mountain setting and the water sources. Typological studies of rock-cut monuments unfortunately tend to dissect places into their features and components in meticulously prepared catalogues, where the coherence of culturally meaningful places is inevitably lost. I suggest that this approach must be replaced with what I term ‘an archaeology of place’, where understanding the complexity of places in a diachronic perspective is not sacrificed to the typological and chronological parsing of its constituents.³ This is almost a proposal to return to approaches such as that of Emilie Haspels, whose intimate engagement with the Phrygian Highlands in the years of 1937–39 and 1946–58 admirably stands closer to a place-oriented archaeology (see now Haspels 2009).

Burying the Dead

While we have increasingly rich literary and archaeological evidence for the close association of Hittite royal burial practices with rock-cut tombs and memorials (Van den Hout 2002), it is only during the Anatolian Iron Ages that the practice of burying the dead in rock-cut chambers became a widespread, inter-regional practice. Rock-cut tombs appear at this time as one of the many forms of burial, alongside other monumental funerary structures such as the tumulus or the tower tomb. Such tombs are prominently attested in Urartu in the Lake Van Basin and the Upper Euphrates valley (Işık 1995; Köroğlu 2008), in Paphlagonia and especially in the modern provinces of Kastamonu and Amasya (Johnson 2010), and in Lydia during the Late Iron Age. This practice seems to have spread throughout much of the limestone landscapes of southern Anatolia, particularly Lycia, Cilicia and Caria in the Hellenistic and Roman periods (Işık 1995; Cormack 2004: 17).

In the Lake Van basin and the Upper Euphrates valley in eastern Anatolia, as well as broadly in Iranian Azerbaijan and the Transcaucasus, Urartian settlement landscapes of the eighth and seventh centuries BC feature a full flourishing of carving, inscribing and shaping the bedrock as a form of dwelling and building. Urartian fortresses are built on soaring rocky hills with major interventions made in the shape of the bedrock by creating stepped surfaces for constructing cut-stone masonry fortification walls, for making staircases, terraces and platforms, and for carving rupestral tombs and open-air sanctuaries as well as cuneiform inscriptions on the living rock. Rather than isolated monuments in the landscape, Urartian rock-cut architecture presents us with a complex worldview of building and dwelling.

Rock-cut tombs in Urartu are known from various citadels of the state, including its long-term capital city at Tušpa-Van Kalesi (on Urartian rock-cut shrines and tombs, see Forbes 1983: 100–13; Işık 1995; Çevik 2000; Köroğlu 2008). The royal tombs at Tušpa (‘Doğu Odaları’) were built in massive proportions, both in terms of the ceremonial platforms in front of them and the interior of the tomb chambers. Entry

to the tomb chambers is gained through raised monumental entrances, accessed through rock-cut staircases and carved into very steep flattened façades. On the façade of the south/southwestern ‘Horhor Odaları’ tombs at Tušpa, a large commemorative inscription of Argišti I (Köroğlu 2008: 25) is somehow reminiscent of the Achaemenid royal tombs at Naqsh-e Rostam near Persepolis in the Fars province of Iran. Similarly, at the frontier fortress of Palu on the Euphrates, a large commemorative inscription of Menua on the very top of the fortress is accompanied by a series of rock-cut, multi-chamber tombs, while the Doğubeyazıt tomb features relief imagery (Forbes 1983: 104–105). The interiors of the tombs feature several niches for offerings and imitation structural members, such as roof beams shown in relief.

Thinking through such a broad and long-term perspective on the Anatolian peninsula, the rock-cut tombs of Achaemenid Paphlagonia present a fascinating case of places where local, Greek and satrapal Persian identities were negotiated through the practices of rock carving (Johnson 2010). During the Achaemenid period, Paphlagonian elites seem to have built a series of funerary monuments in the landscape closely associated with settlements. Iconographic analysis of the tombs that feature columnar temple façades with gabled roofs, and representations of Greek mythological subjects, as well as Achaemenid fabulous beings, suggest a complex hybridisation of visual culture in this mountainous region of the peninsula. The inheritance that this micro-regional development owes to the long-term technologies and practices of rock carving and place-making in the Anatolian peninsula is well balanced with the local innovations in rupestral funerary monuments.

Conclusion

In discussing the making of rock-cut monuments as a place-making practice, one has to be sceptical of the common modernist understanding of landscape and place. According to this view, landscape appears as an unaltered natural environment, a background or undifferentiated space into which ‘socially constructed’ places or ‘state-sponsored’

monuments are inserted. In this world view, places appear as islands or as clearly delineated 'sites', if you will. Here, I intended to critique this modernist notion of space as a noiseless, uniform background, and replace it with a complex notion of landscape, a rich topographical texture, infinitely differentiated, chaotic and continuously altered.

Landscapes are not measurable voids or vast open spaces, but rather form a hybrid product of natural and cultural processes that often mix into each other. Ontologies of places are such that specific geologies encounter and mix with material practices of the everyday, with cultures of worldly living. Communities that define themselves through a certain sense of belonging to a particular place exist by virtue of their specific social attachments, situated memory practices and local histories. The politics of space, spatiality and monumentality are juxtaposed with stories written and recounted about landscapes, and places are thus always already imagined and politically negotiated. Contrary to the modernist dissection of landscape into its discrete components of the natural, the cultural or the imagined, I argue for an understanding of landscape that is only possible at the intersection of all these. In the processes of place-making, that is, in the processes of making places as culturally significant locales (like Maalouf's Ain el-Qabou,) what is important is the blending of the micro-geology of place with the cultures of place that are woven around it, and the stories told about it.

From the Late Bronze Age to the end of the Iron Age on the Anatolian peninsula, the practices of making commemorative rock reliefs and inscriptions, constructing open-air shrines and sanctuaries, and carving out rock-cut tombs have been an ever-evolving place-making technology that inscribed and re-articulated places. Contrary to the widespread scholarly understanding of Hittite rock-cut monuments as solely commemorative, and of Phrygian monuments as reflective only of ritual, I have tried to emphasise the coexistence of commemorative, cultic, funerary and political functions and meanings of rock-cut monuments over the long term. Thus, it may be suggested

that the carving of a rock relief is in itself an innovative, transformative and especially performative act that in a way appropriates existing practices and significations associated with the locale. Through monumentalisation, it artfully clarifies and articulates the richness of the place while incorporating it into new networks of state discourse, preparing the ground for new meanings, practices, stories and negotiations.

Acknowledgements

I thank the editors of this volume for their continuous encouragement and patience.

Notes

1 See the Black Obelisk inscription belonging to the time of Shalmaneser III (Grayson 1996: 65). Similar events are depicted for the scenes usually identified as taking place at the Source of the Tigris (King 1915: relief panel 10; see Schachner 2007 on the Balawat Gates representations).

2 The archaeological magnum opus on Phrygian highlands and their rock monuments is Haspels (1971). For more recent work, see especially Tüfekçi Sivas (1999), Tamsü (2004), Grave *et al.* (2005), Berndt-Ersöz (2006; 2009), Tüfekçi Sivas and Sivas (2007), and Roller (2009).

3 I use the term here with reference to Bradley's (2000) 'archaeology of natural places', as well as Bowser and Zedeño's (2009) 'archaeology of meaningful places'. A similar approach was discussed in a special issue of the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* (Bowser 2004).

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Community and Household

Archaeologists have long studied households and communities as part of the construction of a social archaeology (e.g. Wilk and Ashmore 1988; Nevett 2010; Yasur-Landau *et al.* 2011). Indeed, early interest in household archaeology sparked the continuing interest in communities (MacEachern *et al.* 1989), albeit from the standpoint that the community was simply a supra-household dimension within a fixed locality. Canuto and Yaeger's (2000) volume on the archaeology of New World communities set a more dynamic standard for research into (archaeologically based) communities. Within contemporary archaeology, the study of households, communities and regions provides insight into social and historical processes of formulating place.

As has repeatedly been pointed out (Robin 2002; Souvatzi 2008; Herbich and Dietler 2009), the household is not one thing but many, not a fixed and monolithic entity but a shifting and fluid one whose boundaries are ill defined. The household is therefore not just a social group but also (1) a network of tasks, activities and relationships encompassing that group; (2) the transitions that occur within the household (membership, social relationships, activities, interactions); and (3) the materiality, temporality and place through which the household is defined. Households thus are arenas of human action and interaction: they incorporate a collection of actors (the residents), a system of social relations (the family or other, related groups), and diverse social, economic, ideological and cultural arrangements. In other words, the household forms an enduring unit of social

organisation in which people carry out their everyday practices and maintenance activities (Wilk and Rathje 1982; Netting *et al.* 1984; Blanton 1994; Montón-Subías and Sánchez-Romero 2008; Brumfiel and Robin 2008). It is at the level of the household that individuals communicate most closely with each other, and articulate most directly with economic, environmental and subsistence factors. If archaeologists thus aim to explore the meaning of past social relationships involving factors such as gender, class or age, then it must be recognised that such factors were established, maintained and reproduced at the household level (Price 1999; Webb 2002; Brumfiel and Robin 2008; Frankel and Webb 2012).

Households, like communities, are socially constructed, and embed within them a great diversity and intensity of social relations, daily practices and human decisions. Their material residues reflect behavioural relationships between and within households. The concept of the household is thus crucial for the study of social action and variation, and for treating other topical concerns, from place and space to memory and identity (Allison 1999; González Marcén *et al.* 2007; Souvatzi 2008; Glowacki and Vogeikoff-Brogan 2011; Parker and Foster 2012). In this sense, ‘space’ refers to the physical setting in which daily activities occur, whilst ‘place’ is the socially constructed context of human actions and experiences. Place is thus lived space, imbued with memory and identity that make it integral to the social lives of those who interact with it (Robin and Rothschild 2002; Fisher 2009: 184).

Scrutinising carefully the diverse factors that impact on ethnographically and historically documented households has proven a good starting-point for archaeological endeavours to move from houses and their assemblages to social and economic households (Hirth 1993; Souvatzi 2008). Even if substantial problems of recovery and interpretation remain, household archaeology as usually practiced has certainly enhanced our understanding of the social aspects of diverse types of architectural units (Allison 1999; Nevett 2010). At the heart of its approach is a focus

(1) on everyday practices and maintenance activities; (2) on the values and meanings embedded in people's movements through entrances, along corridors, and in specific (restricted or not) settings within a building; and (3) on the social organisation, interactions and intercommunications within the household or community. Such an approach is well exemplified here in the chapters by Fisher and Belarte, who explore in regions as distant as Late Bronze Age Cyprus and Iron Age South France how new means of socio-spatial integration changed not just the physical but also the social structure of households and the way they were incorporated within and beyond the local community.

Households are regarded as the smallest, most common and active social grouping in the community (Wilk and Rathje 1982: 618). People who live in a community often mark out their occupational space in distinctive ways. Through such patterned 'maintenance' activities, those who live in communities build, modify and/or reshape their physical surroundings in order to preserve memory and experience, and to provide the community with a meaningful sense of time and space. Many material factors involved in these processes are directly accessible to archaeologists, making it possible to scrutinise households and communities within their landscape setting. Foxhall's chapter tackles these issues by examining how decisions made in Bronze and Iron Age Aegean households worked in dialectic relationships with the community, the state and other agents to regulate access to land and labour, and ultimately to shape both rural and 'urban' landscapes.

The community was once regarded as a natural territorial unit organised by people who shared residence or space, and bore a collective consciousness, experience and knowledge (e.g. Redfield 1955; Bell and Newby 1971). Thus, a community was seen as a fundamental social institution, externally bounded and internally homogeneous, through which all cultural, biological and social reproduction took place (e.g. Arensberg 1954). More recently, communities came to be recognised as dynamic, historically contingent, even 'imagined' phenomena (Anderson 1991). Their

members are seen to be involved in diverse social relations that serve to structure and define a community's nature, its economic base and its political discourses – both within and beyond the physical space (e.g. Rodman 1992; Urban 1996; Ashmore 2003). Thus, it is no longer assumed that communities are to any extent homogeneous, and social scientists seek to engage with both the individual people and the wider social configurations that make up a community. This is precisely the task that Bonet Rosado and Mata Parreño have set themselves; the excellent data from which they work enable them to outline a nuanced overview of multiple interactions between Iberian households, local and regional communities in the *Edeta* area of eastern Spain.

Communities may thus be seen as social constructs, sources of identity making. Although not necessarily tied to a specific place (Yaeger 2000: 124), communities typically have a strong association with a 'sense of place' (Feld and Basso 1996; Low 1996), where self, space and time become intricately interlaced (Casey 1996: 36–38). Crucially, communities serve as the primary space in which the social and material conditions of life are developed and transformed (Brück and Goodman 1999: 13).

But how should archaeologists conceptualise communities, and how do archaeological views of community, often simply equated with 'site' or 'settlement', relate to the social science paradigm? Isbell (2000: 243–48) and Yaeger (2000: 124–26) outlined several anthropological sources from which most archaeologists draw their vision of community (e.g. Gerritsen 2004; MacSweeney 2011). One of the difficulties in establishing a distinctive archaeological meaning of community is the disjunction between the social concept (community) and the material site, settlement or settlement pattern (such as the concept of the 'household' vis-à-vis an actual structure). One way of bridging the gap between the abstract notion of a community and the material record of a site or settlement is to consider how a community's activity areas were structured, and attempt to interpret those structures in ways that have meaning for living societies (Neustupny 1991: 330). The chapters by

Sanmartí Grego and Rodríguez Díaz use rich settlement evidence to trace the building blocks of social relations in their study regions on either side of the Iberian peninsula.

Another way to close the gap is the concept of the 'imagined' community as adopted by Isbell (2000) and others (Pauketat 2000; Yaeger 2000; Knapp 2003). The members of such a community share a 'deep horizontal sense of comradeship' (Yaeger 2000: 126), an identity based on the social practices and maintenance activities that occur within a shared space. In such communities, people make informed choices, pursue intentional or unintentional goals and alternatives, and thus establish personal as well as community identities, all circumscribed and configured by practice (Harris 2014).

The concept of community offers the possibility of considering how human agents and strategies, together with material practices and things, impact on sociohistorical development and change, whether between places or within a specific social space. A community is made up of people and things, of social factions and material practices, gendered agents and meaningful symbols – all involved in promoting, resisting or suppressing various agendas. Drawing on these principles, Riva employs the rich Etruscan material record to demonstrate how an archaeological concept of community underscores the active role of material culture in affirming power relations and enabling social reproduction. Overall, the chapters in this section not only stand as testament to the rich archaeological record of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean but also demonstrate that households and communities represent key notions in today's social archaeology.

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23 Rethinking the Late Cypriot Built Environment: Households and Communities as Places of Social Transformation

Kevin D. Fisher

Abstract

The transition to the Late Bronze Age (LBA) was characterized by fundamental changes in the nature of Cypriot society as it shifted from being largely egalitarian and inward looking to socially stratified and cosmopolitan. The appearance at this time of new housing and tomb types, monumental buildings, and the island's first urban centers is typically seen as an indicator of this social change and a by-product of politico-economic processes. This study argues instead that the Late Cypriot built environment was not epiphenomenal to this change, but rather a primary means by which social transformation occurred. In order to demonstrate this, I apply an agent-centered approach that examines how LBA Cypriotes structured and experienced urban space, taking the view that it is through the production of new places for social action and interaction that daily practice was linked to social reproduction and transformation during this period. Emphasizing the mutually constituting nature of people and place, I argue that urbanism fostered new means of social integration and interaction, resulting in significant changes to the physical and social structure of the household and its incorporation within wider communities.

Introduction

The Late Bronze Age (LBA, ca. 1650–1100 BC; or Protohistoric Bronze Age [ProBA], which includes the Middle Cypriot [MC] III and Late Cypriot [LC] periods; Knapp 2013: 27, table 2, 513–15, fig. A10) was a period of profound change for Cypriot society. It witnessed not only the rapid development and institutionalization of social inequalities that had only begun to emerge in parts of the island in the preceding periods, but also economic intensification and political centralization as emerging elites sought to control and exploit the island's copper resources on an unprecedented scale. At the same time, Cyprus became increasingly integrated into the wider political and economic dynamics of the eastern Mediterranean and Near East. It is no coincidence that we also see at this time the appearance of new forms of domestic and mortuary architecture, as well as monumental buildings and the island's first urban centers. It is hard to overstate the revolutionary nature of these developments: within the span of only a few centuries, Cyprus vaulted from insular, village-based society to an urban, cosmopolitan, state-level civilization. Yet, the transformation of the island's built environment has typically been seen as a mere indicator of this social change and a by-product of larger-scale demographic and politico-economic processes. In what follows, I argue that rather than being epiphenomenal to this change, the built environment was a primary means by which social transformation occurred.

To investigate this issue, I adopt an approach that acknowledges the agency of both people and the places they inhabit. I examine how LBA Cypriotes structured and experienced space, arguing that it is through the production of new *places* for social interaction that daily practice was linked to social reproduction and transformation during this period. In this way, urbanism is closely related to new modes of social organization and interaction, seen in significant changes to both the physical structure of the house, the social structure of the household, and its integration within wider local and regional communities. As

such, the changing built environment had far-reaching consequences for how the individuals and groups that constituted Late Cypriot society identified themselves and related to one another amid growing social inequality and competition. Emphasizing the interplay between physical and social boundaries, I examine how these interconnected social developments produced and, at the same time, were products of new building types and settlement forms.

In what follows, I establish first the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of an agent-centered approach to investigating the dynamic interrelationship between people and place. I then discuss the ProBA house and household, emphasizing the role of the house as a place that materialized social boundaries and structured social interaction among household members, and between residents and visitors in the course of daily practice. I conclude by examining the household within its urban context by considering how its members became increasingly enmeshed in various urban communities, from neighborhoods through to the city itself, and how this was manifested in the materiality of house design, boundary maintenance, and city planning.

Agencies of People and Place

Based largely on the work of social theorists such as Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1984), the recognition that people of the past, both individually and collectively, were active agents has come to occupy an important if not central role in archaeological discourse (see recent reviews by Dobres and Robb 2000; Dornan 2002; Gardner 2004). While Hodder (1982; 1992) and others have long argued the need to see material culture as actively engaged in the production of social life, archaeologists have been somewhat less eager to embrace the idea of things as active agents. Nevertheless, there has been a growing acceptance of material agency in the social sciences in general and in archaeology more specifically (Knappett and Malafouris 2007).

The work of George Mead (1934) has been particularly

influential in this regard, emphasizing the central role of the physical world in the constitution and maintenance of the self and social identity, and suggesting that relations between humans and objects are social relations (see also McCarthy 1984; Gell 1998). Actor-Network Theory situates agency in the relationships that people have with other people and objects. Proponents such as Latour (2005: 71–72) contend that anything that modifies a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor and that ‘no science of the social can even begin if the question of who and what participates in the action is not first of all thoroughly explored, even though it might mean letting elements in which, for lack of a better term, we would call non-humans.’ Acknowledging the agency of the material world need not undermine the distinctiveness of human agency, which is dependent on the kinds of relationships that humans can engage in by virtue of their perceptive and communicative abilities (Gardner 2004: 9).

By their sheer scale and relative longevity alone, buildings – perhaps more than any other human creation – have the capacity to affect human action and interaction. Certainly both Western and non-Western cultures anthropomorphize elements of their material world and, viewed from an emic standpoint, buildings (as well as other objects) are seen in many cultures as being, or having the ability to become, living entities (e.g., Saile’s [1977] discussion of rituals undertaken by historic Pueblo groups in the American southwest in which buildings are fed with wafer bread, sacred cornmeal, tobacco, and seeds and thereby ‘animated’ and ‘endowed with a soul’). Like other human and material actors, each building has a biography (Kopytoff 1986) or ‘life history’ constituted in the meanings accumulated over the duration of its existence and that of its ‘ancestors’ and ‘descendants,’ as well as the memories of it held by its human occupants (Pred 1990; Tringham 1995; see also Hendon 2004: 276; Düring 2005). The distinction between human and material actor is further blurred in the affective relationships that people often develop with the places in which they live. Environmental psychologists have long recognized the importance of *place attachment* to individual

and group well-being and identity formation (Russell and Snodgrass 1987; Altman and Low 1992; Marcus 1995).

To see built environments as agents is to acknowledge the difference between space, as the static, physical setting in which everything occurs, and *place*, as the dynamic, socially constructed and meaningful context of human action and experience – a distinction widely accepted in spatial studies across the social sciences (Rodman 1992; Tuan 1977; Feld and Basso 1996; Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003; Preucel and Meskell 2004). In the approach taken here, built environments are places: lived spaces, imbued with identities and memories that make them both products and facilitators of social life. Such a view recognizes the agency of both people and the built contexts within which they act and interact. Built environments are more than mere settings for these actions; they play an active role in the structuring and routinizing of embodied practice through which the structural properties of social systems are produced, reproduced, and transformed.

As I will show, the dynamic interrelationship between people and place was enacted at various spatial scales during the Late Cypriot period, from the household through various levels of community, marking a radical departure from the modes of social organization and reproduction that preceded them. The key to understanding these changes is to investigate how the built environment configured daily practice, actively facilitating particular social interactions through which identities, roles, and statuses were negotiated and displayed. But how can we study this dynamic process in the scant material remains of Late Cypriot buildings?

I have developed an integrative approach to analyzing past built environments (see Lawrence and Low 1990: 482–91) that begins with access analysis to figure out how buildings structure movement and encounter (Hillier and Hanson 1984) (see Figure 23.1). This is combined with a detailed study of how these buildings influence human behavior and interaction through the nonverbal communication of meanings, which are perceived through vision as well as other senses. These meanings are encoded in fixed-feature

elements such as walls and floors, semi-fixed feature elements such as furnishings and other artifacts, and nonfixed feature elements including the physical and verbal expressions of the building's occupants and users (Rapoport 1990: 87–101) (see Figure 23.2). The aim of this approach is to determine the contexts in which particular types of social interactions might take place, emphasizing the importance of *social occasions*, which are undertakings or events that involve co-present individuals and are bounded in time and space and often facilitated by fixed equipment (Goffman 1963: 18–24). It allows us to distinguish between spaces that would likely host public-inclusive social occasions and those suited for private-exclusive occasions. The integrative approach provides a means of investigating the materiality of past built environments, allowing significant insights into the intimate connection between people and the places in which they lived, as well as the wider social implications of this relationship (see Fisher 2007: chs 3–5; 2009a for a detailed discussion).

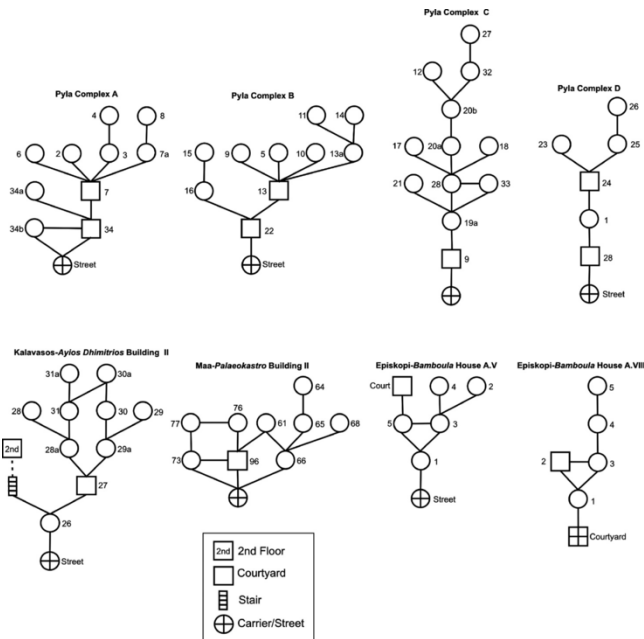


Figure 23.1. Access graphs of Protohistoric Bronze Age houses discussed in the text. By Kevin Fisher.

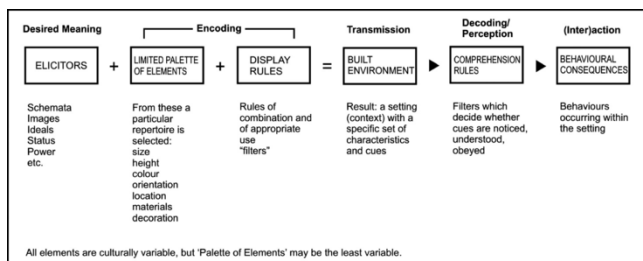


Figure 23.2. A nonverbal communication approach to the built environment. Drawn by Kevin Fisher, after Rapoport (1990: fig. 17).

Household and Community

After Wilk and Rathje's (1982) publication of a symposium on 'household archaeology' in *American Behavioral Scientist*, the household quickly became a central focus of archaeological inquiry (e.g., Netting *et al.* 1984; Wilk and Ashmore 1988; Kent 1990; Blanton 1994; Allison 1999). Wilk and Rathje (1982: 618) defined the household as consisting of the social (members and their relationships), the material (the dwelling, activity areas, and possessions), and the behavioral (activities performed by members). As initially conceived in the context of processual archaeology, household archaeology was concerned primarily with the function of households in economic and ecological processes.

By contrast, more recent approaches emphasize the social interactions within and between households, seeing them not as functional units but rather as a set of social relations enacted through practice (Meskell 1998; Hendon 2004). These relations do not take place in a spatial vacuum, but in some form of constructed space that shapes people's actions and contributes to the meanings given those actions (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997; Hendon 2004). While the material form of the household can act as a medium through which the wider community can exercise a measure of control over what goes on within, it also provides a means of separating the actions of household members from that wider community (Ardener 1993: 11; Allison 1999: 1; also

Altman and Gauvain 1981: 287). The design of domestic space interacts with human action and meaning to create lived space 'in which the house becomes integral to the construction of social identities through a process of ... movements, views and spatial arrangements' (Hendon 2004: 276). In light of the discussion of material agency above, I would argue that it is necessary to consider the mutually constituting nature of all three elements of Wilk and Rathje's original definition (substituting 'practice' for 'behavior') if we are to understand the role of households in social interaction and reproduction. This includes recognition of the experiential elements and affective relationships that make the physical structure of the house a *home* to its inhabitants (Marcus 1995; Tringham 1995). Furthermore, we must address the integration of households within larger-scale social entities. The concept of community provides a means of framing such a discussion.

Isbell (2000) makes the important distinction between *natural* and *imagined* communities. The former concept is derived from early comparative (particularly ethnographic) research in anthropology and refers to universally applicable, bounded, and static units characterized by functional integration, solidarity, and homogeneity in norms and world view. Imagined communities are, by contrast, dynamic, fluid, and changing as actors select among available alternatives, strive to create new ones, and pursue the goals they perceive. As an archaeological concept, the imagined community 'makes clear the active role of material culture – from artifacts to dwellings to regional landscapes – in constructing identities, negotiating social relations, affirming power relations, and enabling social reproduction' (Knapp 2003: 576). These communities are historically contingent and 'ever-emergent' social institutions that generate and are generated by supra-household interactions structured and synchronized by a set of places within a particular span of time (Yaeger and Canuto 2000: 5–6). Because these places have a physical dimension – required for the repeated, meaningful interactions that create and maintain a sense of shared identity, communities are detectable in the material remains of past built

environments. As Cheney (1992: 40; cited in Knapp 2003: 570) argues, ‘...[b]ecause of the dialectic between communities and the physical world the shape of the community as it once existed is revealed in its use of space.’ It remains to investigate how this dialectic was materialized in the built environment of ProBA Cyprus and to assess its role in the dramatic transformations this period witnessed.

Making ProBA Households

Bearing in mind Wilk and Rathje’s (1982: 618) repeatedly cited caveat that archaeologists do not dig up households but must infer them from the material record of houses and their associated artifacts, it is necessary to start with the identification of individual domestic units among the recovered architectural remains. While houses have been identified at a number of ProBA sites, their often-fragmentary nature hinders an accurate determination of their plan. Earlier work on ProBA houses focused mainly on their description and classification. Åström (1972: 29) identified two main types: the three-aisled house surrounding an open court and the L-shaped dwelling (also Weinberg 1983: 57–59). The former was a relatively common type of urban house with a rectangular or square form and (usually) a longitudinal tripartite division of space (Wright 1992: 312), as typified by House A.VI at Episkopi (Kourion) *Bamboula* (Figure 23.3). It is essentially an enclosed version of the π -shaped house type with three wings surrounding a court, found in the earlier levels at the site of Enkomi (Dikaïos 1969–71: 153–70, pls 267–72); Wright (1992: 211) regards this type as a norm in Cypriot building, beginning in the mid-second millennium BC.

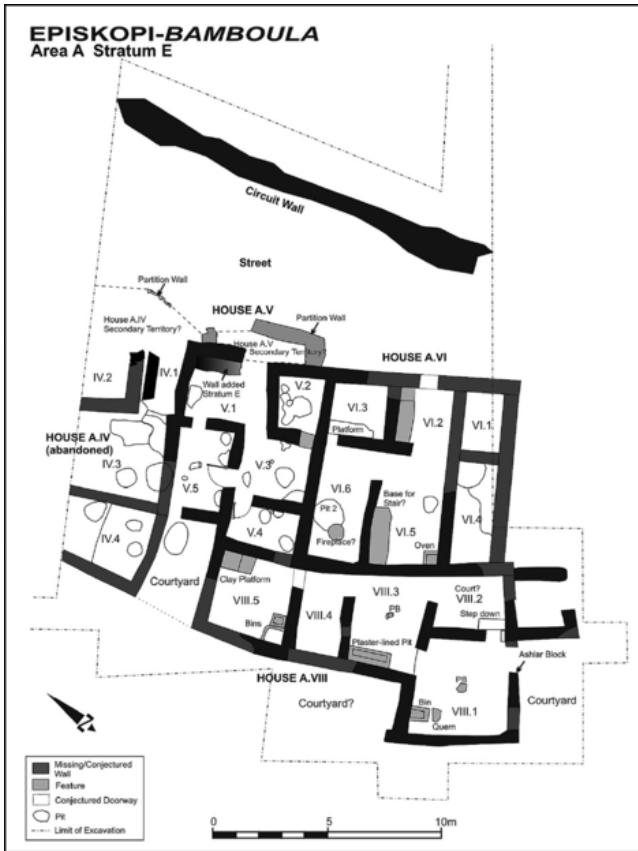


Figure 23.3. Schematic plan of Episkopi *Bamboula* Area A, Stratum E. Drawn by Kevin Fisher, after Weinberg (1983: figs 23 and 24).

The earliest example of this design may well be the MC III house at Kalopsidha *Tsaoudhi Çiftlik* excavated by Gjerstad (1926: 27–37), which consists of 11 rooms built around an inner open court. The L-shaped house has two arms or wings of rooms, one longer than the other, forming (roughly) a right angle (e.g., Episkopi House A.VIII at Episkopi). It also has a courtyard, though an external one, and the angle could sometimes be filled in with rooms (e.g., Episkopi House A.V). These designs mark an important departure from the irregular and agglomerative house forms found in most Prehistoric Bronze Age (PreBA; ca. 2700–1700/1650 BC)

settlements (e.g., Sotira *Kaminoudhia* [Swiny *et al.* 2003] and Marki *Alonia* [Frankel and Webb 2006a]). Furthermore, ProBA houses are typically much larger than their PreBA counterparts and have a greater number of defined spaces, although these spaces tend to be significantly smaller. The social significance of this transformation has, until recently (see Bolger 2003: 41–50), rarely been considered.

I turn now to discuss the effects of changing house form on daily practice, the potential for encounter and social interaction, and the definition of social boundaries. This is based on applying the integrative approach to some of the better-preserved examples of fully published ProBA houses, supplemented by relevant (though less complete) examples from other sites. I focus mainly on non-elite, or at least non-monumental houses, distinguished from their monumental counterparts by their much smaller size and general lack of architectural embellishment, especially ashlar masonry. Eight houses from four sites (see Figures 23.3–23.5, and 23.7), most of which date to the LC IIC–IIIA urban floruit (ca. 1340/1325–1100 BC), were suitable for a detailed application of the integrative approach, revealing broad similarities as well as idiosyncratic features, both of which have significant social implications.

The House and Intra-household Interaction

It is clear that the fixed and semi-fixed feature elements of houses were arranged in order to control both physical and visual access to the buildings' deeper rooms. These elements marked the transitions between spaces suited for activities that were more public-inclusive in nature and those appropriate for more private-exclusive activities. The use of space was also contingent upon the timing of various daily maintenance practices and seasonal activity cycles (Picazo 1997). In this way, ProBA houses materialized social boundaries while providing contexts for interaction among household members and between household members and visitors.

Typically, there is only a single entrance to each house, directly from the street (or from the front/exterior

courtyard, in the case of most of the houses at Pyla Kokkinokremos [Figure 23.4] and the L-shaped House A.VIII at Episkopi *Bamboula*). In nearly all cases, this entrance was wider than the rest of the houses' doorways, likely indicating frequent movement, including the movement of goods, into and out of the house. The entry often provided access to an internal courtyard (or other large, but covered, space, as in Episkopi Houses A.V and A.VIII), either directly or sometimes through an intervening hallway or vestibule (e.g., Complex D at Pyla and Building II at Kalavassos *Ayios Dhimitrios*; Figure 23.5). In addition to providing light and ventilation to its adjoining spaces, the interior courtyard was the key household space for movement and encounter, exhibiting all the characteristics of a public-inclusive space. It is typically the largest interior space, having a high degree of convexity ('squareness') while being well integrated (i.e., easily accessible) and exercising a high degree of control over access to its neighbors. In most cases, this space controlled access to the rest of the house, as most rooms adjoined it either directly or indirectly via short hallways or a circulation ring of which this space was part (Figure 23.1). It is here that household members were most likely to encounter one another in the course of their daily practices.



Figure 23.5. Schematic plan of Kalavasos *Ayios Dhimitrios* Building II. Drawn by Kevin Fisher, after South (1980: fig. 4).

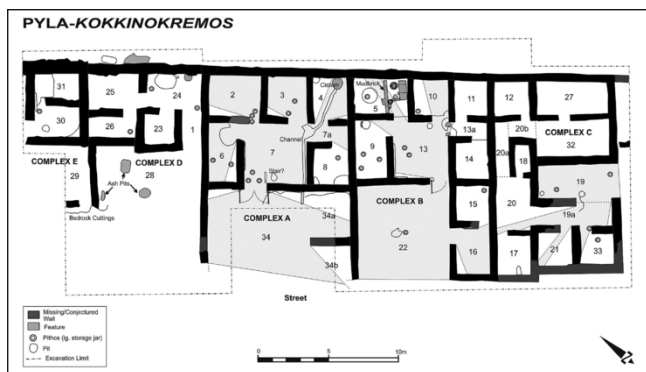


Figure 23.4. Schematic plan of Pyla *Kokkinokremos* showing isovist fields (all points visible from a particular space; see Fisher 2009a: 448–51) from Rooms 7, 22, and outside of Room 19. Drawn by Kevin Fisher, after Karageorghis and Demas (1984: plan 1).

Aside from their large external courtyards, Complexes A,

B, and C at Pyla *Kokkinokremos* exemplify the major features of the courtyard-type house in which a large interior courtyard is surrounded on three sides by several smaller roofed rooms (Figure 23.4). Among the most common semi-fixed feature elements recovered from their interior rooms were large storage vessels (usually *pithoi*), some of which were found with carbonized grain (e.g., in Complex A, Rooms 2 and 7; Karageorghis and Demas 1984: 7, 9), and various grinding implements. In addition, pits were dug into the floors of most houses at Pyla and elsewhere, some of which held storage vessels or were used for storage directly, while others were presumably used for processing activities. Houses at other sites, such as Episkopi *Bamboula* (see above, House A.VIII; Figure 23.3) also have constructed storage bins and other installations such as hearths and ovens. Taken together with the ceramic assemblages, this evidence suggests that the processing, storage, preparation, and consumption of food were common activities in most ProBA households. In Complexes A and B at Pyla, residues of these activities were limited almost exclusively to the central courtyard itself and the three rooms that directly adjoined it. The remaining two rooms, accessible from the central courtyard only through a short hallway (Room 7a in Complex A and 13a in Complex B) have syntactic and architectural characteristics of private-exclusive contexts and tended to have narrower doorways, affording an additional degree of privacy. The interiors of Rooms 8 and 14 in particular could not be seen from the central courtyard. The lack of evidence for production or storage in these spaces (save for a single large vessel in Room 8) might suggest that they functioned at times as the private quarters (bedrooms?) of household members. In houses that may have had full or partial second stories (e.g., Building II at Kalavassos *Ayios Dhimitrios*), it is likely that such quarters were in the upper storey.

As noted above, while there were far more individual spaces in ProBA houses, these spaces tended to be significantly smaller than those in PreBA houses, likely indicating that fewer individuals worked in or otherwise occupied them at any given time. Hall's (1966)

groundbreaking research in *proxemics*, the study of people’s use of space as an aspect of culture, is especially relevant here in demonstrating the relationship between interpersonal spacing and human sensory perception during social interaction (Table 23.1). Interactions that took place in most household spaces would have been within the intimate through social proxemic thresholds, suggesting that people would have usually been in reach of one another, could carry on conversations in a normal voice, and could easily perceive details of one another’s physical attributes, as well as nonverbal indications of emotive state.

Table 23.1. Proxemic distances and corresponding effects on perception.

	Proxer threshold	Intima	Persor	Social (Near Phase)	Social (Far Phase)	Public (Near Phase)	Public (Far Phase)
Distance	0–0.45 m	>0.45–1.2 m	>1.2–2.15 m	>2.15–3.65 m	>3.65–7.6 m		
Touch	Can touch easily; accidental contact is possible	Can reach out and grasp extremity at near phase; cannot touch beyond stretching ca. 0.75 m	Can pass an object by back and forth by both stretching (up to ca. 3 m)				
Oral/aural	Soft voice; intimate style	Conventional voice; casual or consultive style	Conventional voice; used when speaking to group	Full public-speaking voice; frozen style			

Detailed vision (foveal)	Details of eyes, pores on face, finest hairs visible; vision can be distorted or blurred	Details of face clearly visible	Can see head hair clearly; wear on clothing apparent	Fine lines of face; lip movement seen clearly	Eye color not discernable	Difficult to see eyes or subtle expressions
60° Scanning vision	1/3 of face; some distortion	Takes in upper body	Upper body and gestures	Whole seated body visible	Whole body has space around it in viewshed; postural communication becomes important	
200° Peripheral vision	Head against background visible	Head and shoulders visible	Whole body visible	Other people seen if present	Other people become important in vision	

Adapted by Kevin Fisher from Hall ([1966](#)).

On the one hand, the more complex division of space afforded individual household members greater opportunity for privacy than was possible in earlier house types. In regulating interaction with the social environment, privacy is important in allowing for ‘self-evaluation’ through which individuals can integrate experiences, process information received from interactions, and formulate and assess plans for future behavior (Westin [1967](#)). Furthermore, privacy is

intimately linked with self-identity: an individual or group's cognitive, psychological, and emotional understanding of themselves as beings (Altman 1975: 49). On the other hand, the arrangement of spaces around a courtyard allowed opportunities for individuals situated in the courtyard not only to monitor access to the rest of the house interior by non-household members but also surveillance of those who lived and worked in the adjoining spaces (e.g., see the isovist field for Room 7 of Pyla Complex A; Figure 23.4). Even if people in the adjoining rooms were not directly in the viewshed of someone in the central court (or any intervening doors were closed), their activities were well within both the auditory and olfactory range of perception (see Sanders 1990: 59).

Beyond the placement of walls to configure household space, a variety of cues were encoded in the fixed and semi-fixed elements of ProBA houses and communicated to both household inhabitants and visitors. Many of these were found at important transition points, adding a physical, tangible element that materialized social boundaries within and between households. For example, the separation of the interior courtyard from its adjoining spaces was clearly deemed to be important. In spite of their wide doorways, the interior courtyards of Complexes A and B at Pyla (Rooms 7 and 13 respectively) both likely had doors separating them from the outer courtyard, evidenced by the small pits cut into the bedrock at the side of the entries (Karageorghis and Demas 1984: 7–12). At the boundary between Room 7 and Room 3 in Complex A, the threshold was paved with limestone slabs, while in Complex B, the entrance to corridor 13a, which gave access to the most private rooms of the house, was flanked by two flat threshold stones that marked a step downward from the courtyard. The use of flanking stone slabs embedded in the thresholds of doorways at important transition points is attested in several contemporary monumental buildings, including Building X at Kalavassos *Ayios Dhimitrios* (Fisher 2009b). In addition, the thresholds from Room 13 into Rooms 5 and 10 of Complex B were both marked by a downward step. In some instances, more elaborate materials were used for the floor of the

courtyard. In Room 28 in Building II at Kalavassos, the floor was made of small flat stones and *pithos* sherds set in mud, which contrasted with the plaster floors elsewhere in the building (South 1980: 37).

These various cues were not only visible but also kinetic, tactile, and auditory. People had to change their gait as they moved between rooms of different elevations, while changing floor surfaces undoubtedly felt differently to those who walked on them and elicited different sounds from their footfalls. It is through these and other less subtle cues that meanings were encoded and communicated to household members and visitors regarding the boundaries of spaces that were more public or private, or were intended for particular activities at particular times. The redundancy of cues increased the likelihood that meanings were understood and that intended behaviors resulted (Rapoport 1988: 321), although these should not be seen as ‘overarching deterministic forces which impel individuals to act, or act in a given manner’ (Meskell 1998: 217; also Barrett 2001: 156). These messages reinforced the social identity and spatial integrity of the household at a time of rapidly increasing complexity.

What might these arrangements of fixed and semi-fixed feature elements suggest about household social dynamics in the ProBA? They mark a continuation of the trend toward the segmentation or compartmentalization of household space that began in the PreBA, when rectilinear, multi-room dwellings first replaced the single-room circular houses of earlier periods. This was, at least in part, a manifestation of functional specialization that accompanied the development of an increasingly complex ProBA economic system integrating staple and wealth finance (Keswani 1993; see also D’Altroy and Earle 1985; Knapp 2008: 167–68). Further agricultural intensification was required to accommodate both population growth and the need to produce surpluses to support a growing number of specialists who were a key component of the new urban-oriented economy (Keswani 2004: 156; Knapp 2008: 165). While metallurgical, ceramic, and textile production increasingly fell under the purview of

such specialists operating in elite-sponsored workshops (e.g., the metallurgical and textile workshops attached to the sanctuary in Area II at Kition; Smith 2002; 2010), it is clear that these activities also continued to be accommodated in domestic settings. Smith (2002: 299) notes that even when textile production in specialized workshops appears in LC IIC, several sites continue to show evidence for production at the household level. A similar case can be made for ceramic production (London 1991). The appearance of metallurgical facilities in what I have suggested were a series of domestic units in Area III at Enkomi during the LC IIC and IIIA periods is also indicative of household-based production (Fisher 2007: 204–17; see also Pickles and Peltenburg 1998).

The degree to which individual household members' daily routines were occupied with food processing and preparation or other 'productive' activities is unclear. It is important to keep in mind that, whatever functions we assign to domestic spaces based on the recovered material evidence, they do not reflect the full range of uses to which these spaces were put (LaMotta and Schiffer 1999) – uses that undoubtedly varied according to various contingencies as well as annual, seasonal (agricultural), and daily cycles of activity (Picazo 1997; Meskell 1998: 216–17; Allison 1999: 12). While activities such as food processing, preparation, storage, and consumption or craft production tend to leave the most visible traces in the ProBA archaeological record, other aspects of daily practice, including child care, socialization, play, and personal hygiene, are far more ephemeral but no less important to household production and reproduction. As Bolger (2003: 44) suggests, however, the provision of permanent installations for various production and storage practices indicates that functional divisions in houses were conceived of as 'fixed and long-term arrangements of space.'

It is difficult to assess, in this cursory treatment of the data, precisely how these arrangements both reflected and produced gendered divisions of labor. One could perhaps make a case for viewing the ProBA house as a materialization of the increasing task differentiation that

appears to have characterized the ProBA (Smith 2002: 282–83; Bolger 2003: 49). This could be seen as amplifying the gendered division of labor that both Bolger (2003: 38–41) and Webb (2002: 94–95) suggest accompanied agricultural intensification during the preceding PreBA, replacing earlier kin-based modes of production and social organization. The end result was greater female domestic workloads, increasingly focused on processing cereal crops and child rearing (the latter to meet increased labor demands), while men were primarily engaged in agricultural field work and animal husbandry. Thus, most women would have spent more of their time in and around the house.

While acknowledging the ‘essentializing’ nature of this sort of binary gender categorization (Bolger 2003: 51–52; Knapp 2004: 576–77) and the issues associated with the application of broad-based ethnographic analogies regarding a gendered division of labor (Gilchrist 1999; Sørensen 2000), it is clear that gender, in addition to other social and physiological aspects of one’s personhood, such as age and social status, had a significant influence on how an individual’s daily practice was mapped onto particular domestic spaces. In the ProBA, this dynamic was further complicated by the increasing engagement of household members in supra-household communities and politico-economic institutions through which regional systems of production and exchange were organized, allowing some individuals of both (or *all*; see Bolger 2003: 175–82) genders new work opportunities outside the household. The nature of this work likely depended on many factors, not least of which was where one stood in the social hierarchy that emerged during the ProBA. Based on ethnographic and mortuary evidence, Bolger (2003: 196) argues that the rise of complex society caused a fragmentation of gender identities along class lines and resulted in an overall diminution of female status as production and reproduction became separated and female productive labor was devalued. This development was particularly evident in a ProBA mortuary record characterized by the segregation of elite males and females and the near-complete absence of nonelite females (Bolger 2003: 174).

Relating this to the materiality of the ProBA household is a challenging prospect. Even if we assume that women in non-elite households were primarily engaged in food processing activities, it is apparent, given the widespread distribution of grinding equipment and built and portable storage, that elements of these tasks took place throughout many rooms of the house. Moreover, gendered task differentiation in ProBA craft production was not always clear-cut, as both females and males participated in various aspects of textile and ceramic manufacture (London 1991; Smith 2002) and possibly even metallurgy (Bolger 2003: 76–78). In her study of the ProBA textile industry, Smith (2002) concludes that although both men and women were involved in textile production in specialized workshops in LC IIC–IIIA, domestic textile production was exclusively the task of women, who typically worked in open areas such as courtyards. Further contextualized study of the material remains of these activities at the level of detail undertaken by Smith's study is needed if we are to understand them from a gendered perspective.

I would argue that the constituent spaces of the ProBA house were, for the most part, carefully delineated, embodying the need to accommodate specialized productive activities while facilitating opportunities for both privacy and interaction among household members. These houses offered enhanced possibilities for privacy over their PreBA predecessors, although the courtyard-based house design in particular also allowed opportunities for the surveillance of household members. It is not clear, however, exactly how this played out in terms of social dynamics within ProBA households. There does not appear to be anything evident in the configuration of the houses examined here that would compel us to view gendered individuals in terms of strict inside–outside/private–public dichotomies, perhaps lending support to Bolger's (2003: 50) suggestion that gendered behavior may not have been as rigidly circumscribed in Late Cypriot society as it was in neighboring regions (Bolger 2003: 50).

In spite of the fact that some domestic activities took place

in courtyards that would have been partially visible through open doorways or from the roofs or upper floors of neighboring buildings, Bolger's (2003: 49) contention that the ProBA witnessed greater privatization of domestic activities is also borne out in the configuration of houses, with their limited physical and visual accessibility from the outside (e.g., see the isovist fields from the outer court in Complex B and from outside the house in Complex C at Pyla; see above, Figure 23.4). Given the relationship between power and knowledge through surveillance (Foucault 1977), this might be seen on one level as an act of resistance against the power structures that came to intervene in various aspects of ProBA life. At the same time, we should acknowledge that households in general are cultural configurations embodying moral values of authority, property, inheritance, kinship, marriage, and residence – values that 'signal the household as a site of power relations and as a site of separable, often competing, interests, rights, and responsibilities' (Ilcan 1996: 36).

Interacting with Visitors

As already noted, the interior courtyard of the house was the most likely context in which household members would encounter one another in the course of daily practice. But it also usually possessed the characteristics of a public-inclusive space that would have made it a suitable venue for interactions with visitors from outside the household. Ethnographic studies of social interaction in traditional eastern Mediterranean societies (e.g., Abu-Zahra 1974; Benedict 1974; Gavrielides 1974; Ilcan 1996) indicate the importance of regular or institutionalized visitation among households as a means of *social exchange* – the voluntary actions of individuals motivated by the returns they are expected to bring (Blau 1964). Without drawing a direct link between such visitation in the modern eastern Mediterranean and Bronze Age Cyprus, I would at least suggest that the regular reception of visitors was an important element of ProBA supra-household relations. Furthermore, I would argue that these interactions often took the form of *feasts*: occasions involving the communal

consumption of food and drink that are often different from everyday practice and that entail a component of social display or performance that focuses participants' attention and renders them receptive to episodes of heightened emotional experience (Dietler 2001: 71; van der Veen 2003: 414–15). The impetus behind the cyclical nature of feasting lies in the reciprocal character of social relations created and reinforced through these events: one cannot be just a guest, but must also host at a later time (Hendon 2003: 204).

Not all interior courtyards (or equivalent spaces) have direct evidence for such activity, but some, such as Room 27 in Building II at Kalavassos, have fixed-feature elements such as benches, built of field stones, lining the walls (Figure 23.5) (South 1980: 35–38). Two people could sit comfortably on the north bench, while the bench along the south and east walls could accommodate at least four. There is little direct evidence for furniture found in ProBA houses, although images from cylinder seals show feasting individuals seated on stools or chairs facing one another across a table (e.g., Porada 1986: pls XVIII.5–6, XIX.2). In spite of the elite associations and schematic nature of these depictions, it is likely that portable wooden tables and benches, chairs, or stools were used to supplement or replace permanent benches in many ProBA houses. Rooms adjoining the interior courtyard were probably used for ancillary functions during feasting occasions, such as the preparation of food, the storage of equipment, and interactions or activities that might require additional privacy. We should see Room 28 in Building II, which contained a toilet pit (Alison South, pers. comm.; cf. Russell 1986: 246) and had the narrowest doorway in the building, in such a way. Remains of pottery vessels used for serving and consuming food and drink are frequently found in these contexts, or in adjoining rooms where they may have been stored when not in use. The ceramic assemblage found in Rooms 27 and 28 in Building II at Kalavassos, for example, contained a high proportion of fine wares, mostly from open-shaped vessels suited to serving and drinking, including a krater and several bowls (Russell 1986: 242–47).

I have argued elsewhere (Fisher 2007; 2009b) that social occasions such as feasts hosted by elites in monumental buildings were a primary means by which social status and identities were displayed and negotiated in ProBA society. While the social dynamic between host and guest was no doubt different in non-elite households, the role of these occasions in forming and expressing identities and negotiating social relations was no less important. The relationship between feasts and power has been well established (e.g., various papers in Dietler and Hayden 2001; Bray 2003; Wright 2004), but it is clear that we should see this dynamic along a continuum with feasts emphasizing exclusivity, competition, and overt manifestations of status and social distance at one extreme (e.g., the ‘diacritical feast’; Dietler 2001: 85–88), and those fostering inclusiveness and equitable relations at the other (e.g., the ‘celebratory feast’; van der Veen 2003: 414). While most feasts embody elements of both (Dietler 2001: 88), I would suggest that those taking place in the mainly non-elite household contexts discussed here were often among people closer in social status and may have tended toward the less competitive end of the continuum. These feasts provided opportunities for the creation and maintenance of supra-household cooperative alliances and their potential for attendant social, political, and economic benefits (Hayden 2001). Nevertheless, these occasions also allowed more ambitious individuals the opportunity to impress competitors or gain support by placing lower status guests in their debt.

If we can take the configuration of benches in Building II at Kalavassos as fairly typical of seating arrangements, social interactions during feasting took place at maximum distances of less than 3 m and mostly within the 1.2–2.2 m range, which coincides with the near phase of the social proxemic distance. At this distance, various elements of one’s ‘personal front’ (Goffman 1963: 25), including clothing, hairstyle, accessories, scent, and other physical expressions of personal or group identity, are most clearly perceived. Whether or not there were overt expressions of differential power or status at play between host and guest

during these interactions, studies in environmental psychology show that the occupants of a space derive considerable confidence and psychological comfort by hosting interaction within their own (primary) territories (Brown 1987: 517).

It is clear that the central or interior courtyard played an important role in interfacing household members with one another and with visitors. Throughout much of the day, it was a context for various maintenance activities (Picazo 1997) – a place of routine practice for household members. In this sense, parts of the court were undoubtedly gendered spaces. For example, it might be used during the daylight hours for weaving (Smith 2002), among other activities, whereas at other times, the space could become the focus of social occasions such as meals in which all household members might participate or, more rarely, the context of a social occasion involving some household members interacting with visitors. These occasions were important in creating and maintaining various supra-household communities that came to play an increasingly important role in ProBA social dynamics.

The Problem with House Types

I have so far highlighted the shared characteristics of the new forms of housing that emerged in the ProBA in terms of their implications for social interaction. In spite of the emphasis on the emergence of standardized house types in the ProBA (e.g., Bolger 2003: 43, 49; Knapp 2008: 209), I would suggest that in terms of making a house a place laden with meaning, sensory experience, and memory, it is also necessary to consider the idiosyncrasies of a house's fixed, semi-fixed, and nonfixed feature elements. Classifying houses into types obfuscates important differences that are referenced in the formation of identity and memory at both the household and individual level. Building a house, especially in an urban context, undoubtedly involved a number of stakeholders beyond the immediate household, all of whom would have contributed to the encoded meanings (Locock 1994: 5; Allison 1999: 4; Fisher 2009b:

189). Yet, as Rapoport (1990: 15–16, 21) argues, it is the occupants' and users' meanings that are most significant, and these are generated in many environments through *personalization*: 'taking possession, completing it, changing it.' Personalization is therefore a form of territorial marking by the owners or occupants of a space that encodes messages regarding their identity (Brown 1987: 519–21). In this way, we might see the house proper (i.e., without external courtyards) as the primary territory of household members – spaces used by them on a relatively permanent basis and central to their day-to-day lives (Altman 1975: 111–20).

Manifestations of these processes might include significant differences in spatial configuration and other fixed- and semi-fixed feature elements among so-called house types, such as the two L-shaped houses (A.V and A.VIII) from Episkopi *Bamboula* (Figures 23.1 and 23.3) or the 'twin' Complexes A and B at Pyla (Karageorghis and Demas 1984: 9) (Figures 23.1 and 23.4). In spite of overarching cultural similarities, there was wide scope for variation within ProBA society regarding the 'display rules' by which Rapoport's 'palette of elements' could be combined, even in centrally planned urban environments. Purposive decision making of the sort envisioned by Giddens (1984), regarding construction and renovation methods and materials, spatial configuration and room form, and the placement of permanent features and mobile furnishings, ensured that each house had a unique biography and that households and their individual members would have experienced their domestic environments differently from their neighbors (see also Rodman 1992; Isbell 2000: 258; Barrett 2001; Hendon 2004: 278–79). To this, we should add differences in the nonfixed feature elements of household members – their shifting spatial relations (proxemics), bodily movements (kinesics), nonverbal expressions of emotive state, clothing, body modification, and adornment.

The experience of these fixed, semi-fixed, and nonfixed feature elements in the course of daily practice and periodic social occasions forms the basis for distinct individual and household identities. It is also what created a *sense of place*,

defined by Lynch (1981: 131–32) as ‘the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places – as having a vivid, or unique, or at least a particular, character of its own.’ This dynamic between people and place produced and reproduced new modes of interaction within the household, but also between households and various levels of community with which they were increasingly integrated.

The Household in Context: Urban Communities

The houses and households examined in detail here belong to the fully urban period of LC IIC–IIIA and were woven into a larger urban fabric. If the admittedly limited exposures at Enkomi and Kalavassos (and to this we can add Hala Sultan Tekke *Vyzakia*, Episkopi *Bamboula*, and Pyla *Kokkinokremos*) are any indication, at least some of the new urban centers were characterized largely by planned streets, which determined the position and alignment of most of their constituent buildings (Weinberg 1983; Karageorghis and Demas 1984; Courtois *et al.* 1986: 5–8, fig. 1; Wright 1992: 115; Åström 1996). In addition, their design and construction involved the architectural definition of the vast majority of urban space. The open spaces between buildings, the control of which had likely been negotiated among competing groups through the placement of tombs in the Proto-urban phase (before LC IIC), were now incorporated within the structure of contiguously placed buildings on well-defined streets (Fisher 2007: 287–93).

While the nature of the political organization of Cyprus during this period is the subject of intense debate (recently, see Knapp 2008: 144–53; 2013: 432–47), we should see the overall plan of the new cities as a product of ‘top-down’ decision making by ruling elites, whether they exercised political power only locally or at the island-wide level. Indeed, the form of the new urban environments was a product of elite place-making writ large, symbolized by the use of the grid at some sites, which has been recognized as a

tool of dominance and oppression in societies engaged in centralizing authority (e.g., Love 1999; Grant 2001). As such, the LC IIC–IIIA cities were the ultimate expressions of the desire to control movement and interaction, first seen in the forts erected at the beginning of the ProBA. The extant remains of these cities indicate the large-scale appropriation of space and its incorporation into highly planned, imageable built environments. Lynch (1960: 9) sees *imageability* as ‘that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer. It is that shape, color, or arrangement which facilitates the making of vividly identified, powerfully structured, highly useful mental images of the environment.’ The enclosure of some urban environments (e.g., Enkomi, Kition, and Maa) by massive cyclopean fortifications undoubtedly contributed to this imageability. It is likely that the highly imageable urban center was one of the more clearly defined material manifestations of community with which many LBA Cypriotes increasingly identified.

The existence of urban communities that were intermediate between the city and the household is likely, but their social and material boundaries are less easy to define. Smith (2010) suggests that the division of cities into neighborhoods and districts is a universal of urban life for all time periods. He defines a neighborhood as a residential zone that exhibits a great deal of face-to-face interaction and is distinctive on the basis of physical and/or social characteristics, while a district is a larger administrative unit within a city (Smith 2010: 139–40). Distinct districts are difficult to substantiate given the relatively small size and limited exposures of most LC urban centers, but we are perhaps on somewhat firmer ground discussing neighborhoods. By LC IIIA, if not earlier, Enkomi was arranged in clearly defined blocks by its street system and, although the internal arrangements of most of these blocks are unclear due to the conflation of various architectural phases in published plans (e.g., Courtois *et al.* 1986: fig. 1), it appears that each consisted of a number of contiguously placed buildings of various shapes and sizes (Figure 23.6). While it is possible that these blocks might have constituted

some form of neighborhood, residents would likely have had greater occasion to interact with those who lived in units across the main streets. This socio-spatial arrangement is referred to as a ‘face-block’ neighborhood, defined as two sides of one street between intersecting streets (American Planning Association 2006: 409). At both Kalavassos Ayios Dhimitrios and Episkopi Bamboula, differences in house size, alignment, and quality of construction, as well as the degree of planning between areas of the site, also suggest the existence of distinct neighborhoods (Weinberg 1983: 52–57; Wright 1992: 115).

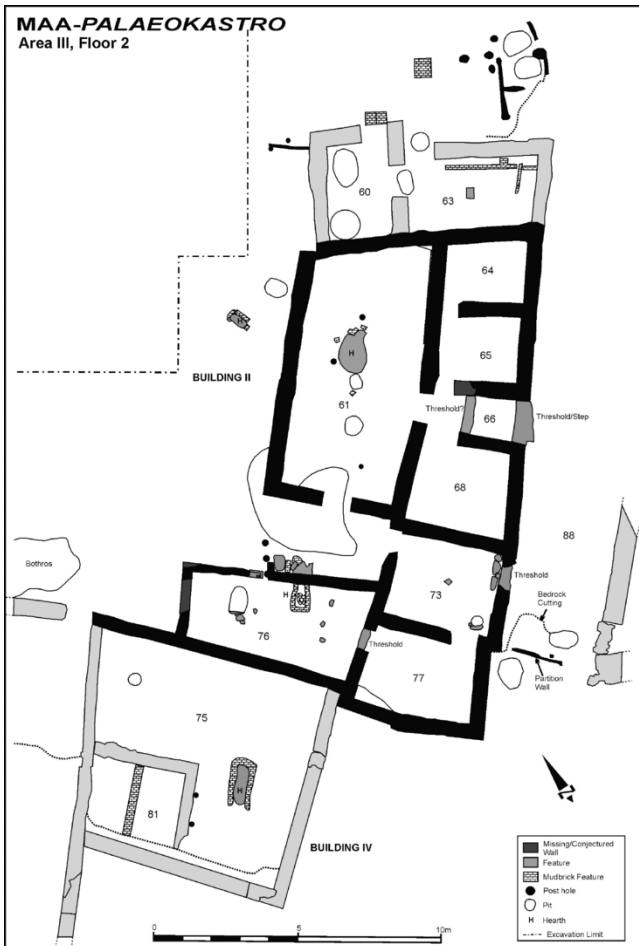


Figure 23.7. Schematic plan of Maa Palaeokastro Building II, Floor 2. Drawn by Kevin Fisher, after Karageorghis and

Demas (1988: plan VIII).

In the LC IIC–IIIA urban landscapes, where most space was architecturally defined, it was necessary for residents to demarcate unambiguously and maintain the boundaries of the area under their direct control, i.e., their primary territory. It is not surprising that a number of the houses studied here exhibit episodes of rebuilding on the same or nearly identical plan. For example, at LC IIIA Episkopi *Bamboula*, the houses of Area A were destroyed at the end of Stratum D (Weinberg 1983: 9–26). Houses A.V and A.VI were rebuilt in Stratum E using the same plan by leveling the debris, raising the floors and thresholds, and constructing new walls directly on top of the old foundations. Such continuity is more than a mere demonstration of enduring property ownership. It marks a constancy of dwelling that reified a household's attachment to a particular place through the accumulation of meaning and the formation of individual and collective memories (Ingold 2000: 175; Zerubavel 2003: 41). Attempts to display such continuity of spatial use and control were an essential part of place-making throughout the urban social hierarchy.

Despite continual efforts at boundary demarcation and maintenance, however, urban landscapes were places of fluidity, negotiation, and change. The fact that House A.VIII at Episkopi was built *de novo* in Stratum E and extended beyond the remains of the house it replaced demonstrates that urban development was a dynamic process, as some households in a given neighborhood grew or contracted; vacated, transferred, or subdivided their properties – processes that were materialized in the unique biographies of individual houses (Düring 2005; Nanoglou 2008; Tringham 1995). The ambiguity of some boundaries can be seen in the design of the large external courtyards that fronted Complexes A, B, and D at Pyla *Kokkinokremos* (Karageorghis and Demas 1984: 6–32) (see above, Figure 23.4). The fact that these courtyards appear to have been completely open to the space in front of the houses, presumably a street, indicates that they were intended to be

both readily accessible and completely visible from the street. The function of these courts is unclear, but given the tendency to define spaces architecturally in LC IIC–IIIA urban environments, the lack of a physical boundary is unusual and introduces ambiguity and opportunities for negotiation or contestation. These spaces might have been what Altman (1975) refers to as ‘secondary territories,’ which are accessible to a wider range of users, although regular occupants often exert some degree of control over who can enter a space and over their behavior. Because secondary territories blend public or semipublic access with control by regular occupants, there is potential for confusion or social conflict as boundaries are established, tested, and violated (Altman 1975: 114; see also Lawrence’s [1990] discussion of ‘collective’ spaces).

In addition to the negotiation of boundaries invited by these transitional spaces, there is some evidence to suggest that the efforts of ruling elites to impose order through urban planning did not go unchallenged. In some urban areas, there are instances of households laying some claim to sections of what would appear to be public streets. For example, the owners of Houses A.V and A.IV at Episkopi constructed partition walls using wooden posts or shallow trenches and field stones in front of their houses during Stratum D, essentially appropriating part of the street (Weinberg 1983: 10) (see above, Figure 23.3). Similarly, partitions were erected at Maa *Palaeokastro*, running perpendicular to the east wall of Room 73, partially blocking off part of the street between Buildings II and III (Figure 23.7) (Karageorghis and Demas 1988). The placement of new tombs in the streets and open areas at Episkopi *Bamboula* in Area E (Benson 1972; Weinberg 1983: fig. 25) and Alassa *Pano Mandilaris* (Hadjisavvas 1986) was one of the most potent symbols of the contesting, if not appropriation, of ‘public’ space, and indicates that at least some streets were deemed by neighboring households as a secondary territory or collective space. This suggests that even established, well-marked boundaries were sometimes ignored, challenged, or at least open to negotiation, perhaps in response to the waxing or waning of the sociopolitical

authority of those involved, or based on changing norms or rules regarding the use of space established at the neighborhood, city, or polity level.

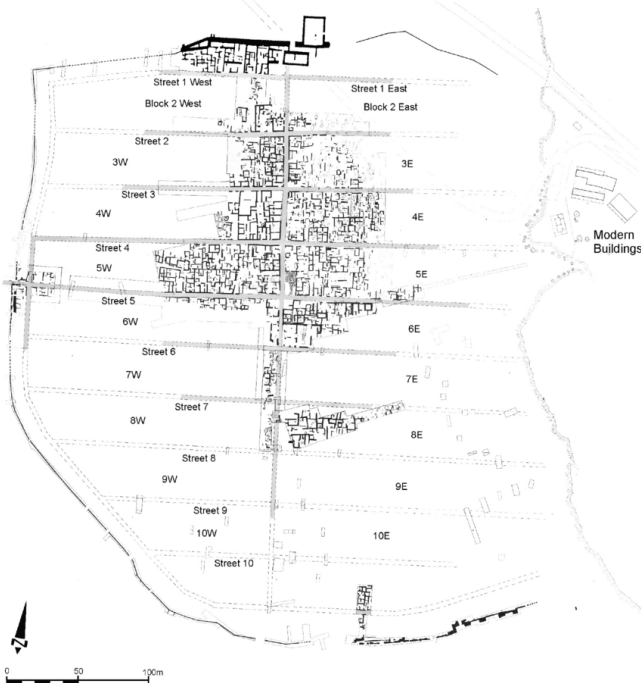


Figure 23.6. Plan of LC IIIA Enkomi, ca. 1200 BC. Drawn by Kevin Fisher, after Schaeffer (1971: plan IV) and Courtois *et al.* (1986: fig. 1).

Conclusions

Cyprus during the ProBA was an utterly transformed place from the PreBA that preceded it. The PreBA built environment was characterized, for the most part, by undifferentiated domestic architecture built in agglutinative and accretive settlement forms. The excavations at Marki Alonia, a site occupied ca. 2500–1700/1650 BC, provide the most comprehensive picture of a PreBA settlement to date, and the typical compound or house there consists of two or three rectilinear covered rooms at the back of a larger courtyard, all of which were irregularly shaped (Frankel and Webb 2006a; 2006b). Although the establishment of major

pathways in later phases may have involved ‘wider communal decision-making,’ there is little evidence for settlement planning coordinated at the community level (Frankel and Webb 2006a: 314). During this period, funerary ritual in extramural mortuary settings became the primary arena for intracommunity interaction and identity formation, as well as social competition and status display (Keswani 2004; 2005).

It is difficult to describe the changes that rapidly followed as anything less than a revolution. Within less than three centuries, the primary locus of social interaction and competition shifted from the funerary realm to new types of domestic and monumental buildings constructed in urban landscapes. Fully urbanized ProBA society was hierarchical yet factionalized, and individuals became enmeshed in a multiplicity of cross-cutting social networks, from the household through various levels of community, depending on gender, age, social status, and other elements of personhood. These relations linked individuals to communities of people with whom they would have face-to-face interactions, as well as others with whom they may have met less frequently (if at all, in some cases) but were nonetheless associated through overlapping social, economic, ideological, and political ties (Knapp 2003). ProBA Cypriot individuals and collectivities engaged in acts of place-making that provided the contexts for these actions and interactions, creating built environments that ranged in scale from the rooms of houses and halls of monumental buildings, through the neighborhoods of planned cities and beyond into regional settlement networks. It is in the making of these built environments and their use in daily practice that ProBA society was created, reproduced, and, ultimately, transformed.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Bernard Knapp and Peter van Dommelen for their invitation to contribute to this volume. This chapter has benefited from the insightful comments of Bernard Knapp and Sturt Manning, as well as discussions with my

former colleagues at Brown University. Thanks also to Sheri Pak. Any errors or omissions are my own. This research was funded or otherwise supported by the National Science Foundation (Award # BCS-0917732), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Archaeological Institute of America, the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute, the American Schools of Oriental Research, the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, the University of Toronto, and the Department of Classics at Cornell University.

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24 Households, Hierarchies, Territories and Landscapes in Bronze Age and Iron Age Greece

Lin Foxhall

Abstract

This chapter investigates how the sociopolitical meanings and the practical significance of land were entwined in Bronze and Iron Age Greece to shape landscapes and territories by approaching settlement hierarchies from a new perspective. In virtually all ‘Mediterranean’ societies, in all periods, it is households, in dialectic relationships with community, state and other agents, that inhabit, cultivate, exploit and, ultimately, shape a major portion of both rural and ‘urban’ landscapes. The aggregate of household decisions, therefore, plays a key role in the formation of the archaeological landscape record for any specific society or period. Local concepts of household, property and succession varied, along with the sociopolitical conventions that regulated access to land and labour: households were set in quite different kinds of political systems over the course of the Bronze and Iron Ages. It was the enactment of these local habits in their spatial and political settings that built territories. ‘Territory’, however, was not the monolithic imposition of omnipotent state power penetrating all sectors of a landscape, even in the relatively centralised states of the Aegean Bronze Age. Rather, it is more of a spectrum with fuzzy edges, with more or less control over particular places or people.

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to re-examine from a new perspective the settlement hierarchies of the later Bronze Age and Iron Age in mainland Greece and Crete, as revealed through archaeological survey and excavation. I want to take a bottom-up approach, to explore (1) the levels at which decisions that shaped specific local landscapes were taken, and by whom; (2) how these decision-making processes changed over time; and (3) how decisions taken by different groups and individuals became enmeshed to produce the archaeological landscapes we discover. I combine our understanding of households, as we know them through houses, settlements and occasionally texts, with the archaeology of the wider landscapes they inhabited, including agricultural fields and other areas of economic exploitation and social use. Analysis focuses in particular on the formation and functioning of rural or village houses in the settlement networks of two case studies, with less attention paid to ritual and mortuary landscapes, and urban habitation.

My key questions centre on how different kinds of spaces were used and who or what factors influenced the choices made about how and where spaces were construed, constructed and modified. What roles did state or other political authorities play, or did such decisions emerge as a consensus of social convention? At what level were decisions taken about how to use communal space, or space allocated to (or claimed by) households or other agents? To what extent did the decisions of individual households shape the uses of spaces and form relationships or links between different kinds of spaces, and the allocation of activities and functions among them? And to what extent were household decisions shaped by constraints emanating from, on the one hand, other members of the communities in which they lived and worked, and on the other hand by political and economic forces extending beyond the local community?

Changes over time and regional variation are critical: as the hierarchical structures of the countryside change, and

rural households adjust their activities, uses of space and use of material culture alter accordingly. This exercise should help us to understand in greater depth both the extent and the limits of elite power over small-scale cultivators in their wider landscape settings, as well as the loci of decisions with taphonomic impact for archaeologists.

Theoretical Contexts

In the Bronze and Iron Age Aegean, archaeological treatments of territory, in so far as it has ever been consciously considered, have largely begun from a top-down perspective (Chadwick 1972; Bennet 1995; Knappett 1999; Schoep 1999; Adams 2006; Shelmerdine 2006; Shelmerdine and Bennet 2008). Several studies explore aspects of the territorial domains of individual polities in Bronze Age Crete, investigating very different lines of evidence, for example material cultural links, which may express shared culture and identity (Knappett 1999; Adams 2006), horizontal ('integration') and vertical ('connectedness') links across the landscape (Haggis 2002), or administrative documents (Schoep 1999). All of these have suggested that smaller, regional territories and competing elites operated independently rather than as monolithic centralised states, but the key focus remains the state or polity (see also Damilati and Vavouranakis 2011; Vansteenhuyse 2011). Cavanagh's (2009a: 55) notion of territory in prehistoric Laconia, inspired by Delaney (2005), is quite loosely formulated, stressing historical contingency and cultural embeddedness. Cavanagh applies the rank-size rule (plotting the site size, as a proxy for population, against their ranking in the sequence on a logarithmic scale) for early and later Bronze Age sites in the Peloponnese to show that sociopolitical demands warp the distribution of population and settlement hierarchy; in the case of Late Bronze Age Laconia, he interprets this as 'the naked expression of political power', in which small sites lose out to larger ones (Cavanagh 2009a: 63–64; cf. Cavanagh 2009b). None of these approaches, however, addresses the inner workings of how a territory might be constructed and enacted in these

societies, or the specific roles played by different agents; most treat territory as a concept quite generally and schematically, or as a given.

In recent years, some political geographers have attempted to interrogate the concept of territory, mostly in relation to the contemporary world, but also in terms of its historical precedents and development. This body of literature is exceptionally helpful in so far as it dissects the in-built assumptions about what 'territory' might be, and its significance. Most of this work, however, reaches back into historical contexts only as far as the early modern period. Often it zooms in on the eighteenth century as a tipping point within a larger intellectual project to span the birth of modernity and transitions to postmodernity, in particular the impact on and role of territory in the development of the nation-state and its postmodern metamorphoses into a global world (Antonsich 2009; 2011). A few scholars (Soja 1989; Sassen 2006; most notably Elden 2003; 2010; 2011; 2013) have attempted to look further back in time, to medieval Europe and Classical Greece and Rome, depending for the most part on elite texts for understanding the conceptualisation and operation of territory. This body of scholarship, however, shows little awareness of the large amount of relevant archaeological data on settlement, space and landscapes and their cultural construction.

Starting with the archaeological evidence, and focusing on the very different ways in which ancient states formulated and enacted territory, i.e. the ways in which state power did and did not operate successfully in the spaces of inhabited landscapes, it is possible to add further depth and clarification to this work of unpicking concepts and practices of territory to expand our understanding of its key components, as well as its social and political roles in a wide range of human societies. The intricacies of the political and social geographies of the ancient past reveal that the spatial expression of power was very complex, deeply embedded in specific social and economic relationships, limited by technologies of administration and governance, and usually fragile and highly fragmented. The data that we have more

often show households rather than individuals or communities: the latter in their landscape setting are often composed of the aggregate of many household decisions shaped by specific political, economic, social and environmental agents and constraints. In addition, the archaeological evidence reveals that choices about shaping local landscapes were often very localised, indeed taken at household level. Although a significant part of the context for these specific decisions includes a range of other agents, elites, polities and states among them, territory is certainly not the monolithic imposition of a virtually omnipotent state power penetrating all sectors of a landscape, even in the relatively centralised states of the Aegean Bronze Age. ‘Territory’, then, is not a uniformly coloured-in map of power, control or group identity, and ‘borders’ might often have been quite fuzzy. Rather, it is more of a spectrum, with more or less control over particular places or people in those settings.

In the following sections, I investigate the potential of this theoretical framework through two case studies that cover the transition between the Bronze and Iron Ages. The first focuses on the area of Messenia (including Pylos) in the southwest Peloponnese of mainland Greece, the area of a major Bronze Age polity that changed radically in terms of its political and social geography during the Iron Age. The second focuses on the area around Mirabello Bay in east Crete, where the complex settlement record of the later Bronze and Iron Ages has been particularly well explored.

Messenia, Pylos and Nichoria

Messenia, in the southwest Peloponnese, has been the subject of two excellent archaeological surveys: the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project (PRAP) (Davis *et al.* 1997; Davis 1998; Alcock *et al.* 2005) and the pioneering Minnesota Messenia Expedition (UMME) (McDonald and Rapp 1972), as well as excavations at the palace site of Pylos (Blegen and Rawson 1966–73) and the settlement of Nichoria (McDonald and Wilkie 1992; 1983). This body of research has generated a very full archaeological record,

suitably detailed for the investigation of how people inhabited the landscape and constructed territories.

The area around the so-called Palace of Nestor at Pylos (located at Ano Englianos) was the primary focus of settlement in the Middle and Late Bronze Age (Figure 24.1; for dates, see Table 24.1). The predecessor to the surviving Late Helladic (LH) IIIB palace (built around 1300 BC and destroyed about 1200 BC) was constructed in LH IIIA (around 1400 BC) (Shelmerdine 1998: 81), a phase widely attested on PRAP sites. The site had almost certainly been fortified much earlier, perhaps around 1700–1600 BC (Davis 1998: 67–68), but the LH IIIB palace had no fortification wall. Most of the *tholos* tombs on outlying sites had gone out of use by the end of LH IIIA, a phenomenon interpreted by the PRAP team as an element of the palace ‘restructuring its power’ and its relationships with local elites to focus more on religious events and feasting, ‘state sponsored conspicuous consumption’, which were part of ‘palace-based rituals of display’ (Davis *et al.* 1997: 421; Bennet 1998: 126). One interesting exception is the construction of a new *tholos* tomb at Nichoria just at this time (see below). Throughout the later Bronze Age, there were many small sites, and almost all sites occupied in Middle Helladic (MH) II–LH II continued to be occupied in LH III, but the numbers of small sites farther distant from the palace seem to rise slightly between MH II–LH II to LH III (Davis *et al.* 1997: 420–21, figs 9 and 10). Not only was the palace the largest site by far in the survey area (around 18 ha or more), but intensive survey also documented a very substantial lower town that grew up around the palace. This settlement was already expanding considerably in MH (5.5 ha), growing further in LH I–II (7 ha), and reaching an extent of 12.4 ha by LH IIA–B (Davis *et al.* 1997: 430; Bennet 1998: 135).

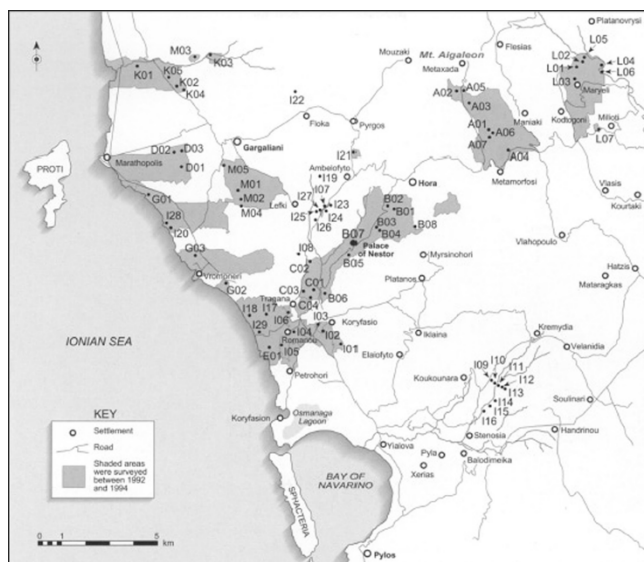


Figure 24.1. Map of the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project (PRAP) survey area (courtesy of Jack Davis and the PRAP project).

Table 24.1. Aegean Chronology

Crete (dates BC)		Historical terminology		Mainland Greece (dates BC)
Middle 2000– Minoan 1900 (MM) IA	}		{	Middle 2000– Helladic 1900 (MH) I
	}	Protopalatial (First Palace Period)		
MM IB 1900– 1100	}		{	MH II 1900– 1700
MM II 1800– 1700]		[
MM III 1700– 1600]		[MH III 1700– 1600

Late Minoan (LM) I A	1600–1500]	Neopalatial (Second Palace Period)	LH I	1600–1500
LM IB	1500–1450]		LH IIA	1500–1450
LM II	1450–1370 }		LH IIB	1450–1400
LM IIIA	1370–1300 }	Third Palace Period }	LH IIIA	1400–1300
LM IIIB	1300–1200 }		LH IIIB	1300–1200
LM IIIC	1200–1050]	Postpalatial	LH IIIC	1200–1050
Subminoan	1050–950		Submycenaean	1050–1000
Protogeometric	950–900		Protogeometric	1000–900
Protogeometric B	900–800		Early Geometric	900–800
Middle Geometric	800–750		Middle Geometric	860–750
Late Geometric	750–700		Late Geometric	750–700

The chronology used here is based on Shelmerdine (2008: 4–5) and Dickinson (1994: 13, 19; 2006: 23). Wallace (2010: 28) uses slightly earlier dates for the Minoan sequence. All dates are approximate and much debated.

Two relatively large sites well beyond the palace were identified: Koryfasio Beylerbey (I01, more than 3.53 ha) and Gargaliani Ordines (K01, 2.1 ha) (Davis *et al.* 1997: 422–23, 425–26). Smaller sites were discovered near I01 Koryfasio Beylerbey (D01, D02, G03, I03, I04, UMME 400) and at some distance inland from the palace (GAC D20). Small sites, however, were absent from the immediate vicinity of the palace on the Englianos ridge itself (Davis *et al.* 1997:

428). In the area east of Mount Aigaleon, LH III material was sparse, but there was more LH I–II material: PRAP researchers suggest that this region perhaps formed a boundary zone when the palace reached the extent of its full power, or that palace attention focused more to the south, towards the ‘second-order’ settlement at Nichoria (for which there is also textual evidence of close connections) (Davis *et al.* 1997: 423–24; Bennet 1998: 134–38). The PRAP team have also argued that the two larger non-palace sites can be identified with toponyms in the list of the nine ‘towns’ of the Hither Province found in the Linear B documents: K1 Gargaliani Ordines (*pe-to-no*), I01 Koryfasio Beylerbey (*a-ke-re-wa*) (Davis *et al.* 1997: 425–27).

Bronze Age Nichoria

The settlement of Nichoria, a substantial and long-lived site spreading over two flat ridges joined by a saddle (ca. 500 m long, and ca. 200 m at widest point) lasted from MH through the eighth century BC, spanning the later Bronze Age and early Iron Age. The evidence that it served as a second-order administrative centre for the palace at Pylos appears strong. It is generally identified with one of the towns of the Hither Province found in the Linear B tablets, *ti-mi-to-a-ke-e*. Like other second-order centres, it was probably already an elite headquarters before being taken over by the palace (Shelmerdine 1998: 142–44; 2006: 73). The site peaked in LH IIIA and remained stable or even decreased in size during LH IIIB (the period of the surviving palace at Pylos). Nichoria was abandoned at the end of LH IIIB2, approximately contemporaneous with the destruction of the palace at Pylos, but there is no sign of disaster or destruction at Nichoria (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 459). The LH town was quite large, covering more than 4 ha of built space in LH III (McDonald and Rapp 1972: 280), and thus it was considerably larger than either of the two settlements (K01 Gargliani Ordines and I01 Koryfasio Beylerbey) identified as second-order administrative centres by the PRAP survey. There is no evidence at Nichoria of the small rural outlying hamlets or farms in the immediate

vicinity, as appeared in survey (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 458). The closest site that might be such an outlying hamlet or farm is Velíka Skordhákis (UMME 112), on a small rise near the coast close to the mouth of Velika River, about 0.8 ha, and located about 2.5–3 km from Nichoria (McDonald and Rapp 1972: 282). This pattern suggests exploitation of farmland directly from the nucleated settlement.

The settlement itself consisted of a sprawl of houses along the length of the ridge, with no evidence of fortification (Figure 24.2). These houses were not monumental or elaborately decorated, but built as stone socles with mud-brick or mud superstructures; those of LH IIB were the most carefully built (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 456), perhaps by expert masons. During the LH IIIA peak of settlement, probably about 150 houses were in use simultaneously (Walsh and McDonald estimated a population of about 700). Although 22 of these have been excavated to some extent, few were fully excavated. Houses were freestanding and no two shared walls. They were not all built at once (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 463), and some houses were modified considerably over their lifespan (e.g. units II-6, III-2; Aschenbrenner *et al.* 1992: 369–71, 385). House plans were very poorly preserved, so it is not possible to determine internal spatial organisation. Most seem to be rectangular, consisting of two to four rooms, but there is at least one apsidal house (e.g. unit III-3; McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 398), and occasional curving sections of house walls. Most had only a single story (only five had evidence for an upper story), and one seems to have had a cellar. The excavators believed that the modest size of houses and their plans suggested that they were intended for nuclear families.

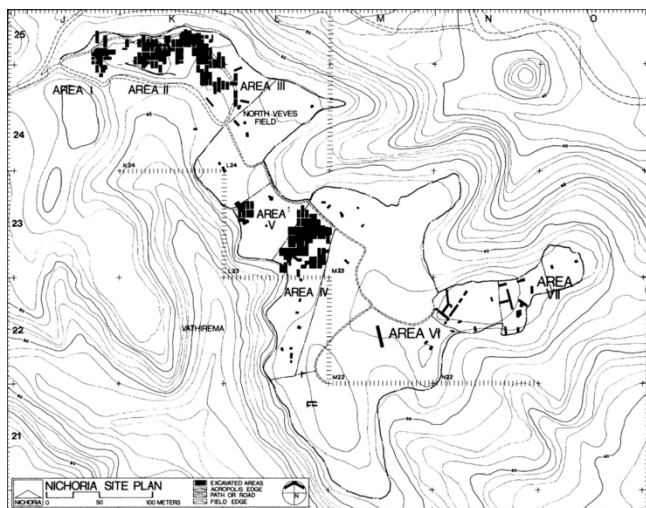


Figure 24.2. Nichoria site plan and excavation areas (courtesy of the University of Minnesota Press).

There was some variation in building techniques; for example, one house appears to have had a half-timbered front wall (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 455). Their orientation was regular (NE-SW), but the main entrances faced different directions. There appears to have been open space around each house, with a considerable amount of refuse between houses suggesting trash piles, gardens and animal stabling. There was limited evidence for craft working in some houses (e.g. an exceptional concentration of spindle whorls in unit II-3; Walsh and McDonald 1992: 461). A few houses may display specific consumption patterns (e.g. concentration of worked stone in unit IV-4, the one elite house; recovery of large numbers of metal artefacts in the fill of the nearby W gulley [Area IV SW]; similarly in area III, 58% of all metal items appeared in one house, III-4).

Despite the existence of a series of monumental tombs close to the site, including a very grand *tholos* tomb constructed in LH IIIA1 and continuing in use into LH IIIB, there is evidence for only one elite house, the partially excavated complex Unit IV-4A. It seems to have been built above large complexes of earlier LH IIIA1 and LH II date

(Walsh and McDonald 1992: 460), so perhaps elite occupation on this particular sector of the site was quite long-lived. This unit (IV-4A) covered an area of at least 70 m², and contained the only formal *megaron* on the site (a room with a central hearth flanked by columns) (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 460–64).

So what exactly did ‘palace control’ of second-order centres consist of in the Late Bronze Age? It is clear from the Linear B tablets found at Pylos that the palace officials divided their territory into two administrative districts called the ‘Further’ and ‘Hither’ provinces, each of which contained a number of settlements that served as administrative nodes. These are often called ‘towns’ in the scholarly literature, but the Mycenaean Greek term for them seems to be *damoi* (*da-mo*), ‘communities’, the equivalent of later Greek *dêmos*, and they were perhaps communities predating palatial authority (Lupack 2011: 212; see also Shelmerdine 2006: 76). The ‘Further’ province, with seven ‘towns’, is widely thought to be the inland area beyond Mt. Aigaleon; the ‘Hither’ province, with nine ‘towns’, covered the western area towards the coast (Chadwick 1972: 104–105; Davis *et al.* 1997: 424). The *damoi* appear to have officials: *ko-re-te* and *po-ro-ko-re-te* (‘mayor’ and ‘vice-mayor’), and there is also a ‘*da-mo-ko-ro*’ who managed all the *damoi* in an administrative district (province), and perhaps mediated between the palace and the individual *damoi*. Although chosen by the ‘king’ (*wanax*), he may be from the provincial elite (Chadwick 1972: 105; Lupack 2011: 212–13).

There is also a category of people among the local elites listed individually or in groups called ‘land holders’ (*ko-to-no-o-ko* – *ktôina*, ‘plot, possession’ + *echô*, ‘have, hold’). These people both held land in the *damos* and seem to have been involved with the local management of the community. Although the *damoi* paid taxes to the palaces, they appear to have organised themselves locally, and probably for the most part independently. Most of the land listed in the administrative records of the palace appears to belong to the *damoi*, although in some cases the palace influenced who

had access to it and what obligations in services or goods were due back in return (Shelmerdine 2006: 75–76). Conversely, it is clear that there was also a considerable amount of land never mentioned in the Linear B documents that was within the remit of the *damos* but over which the palace appears to have had no authority and in which it took no interest. Similarly, archaeological evidence of commodities such as legumes, which appear in the palace but never in the administrative records, and the limited nature of the palace's direct economic interests in the documents, suggests that palace control was limited and selective (Lupack 2011: 212–14; see also Halstead 1992: 58; 2011: 231–32; Shelmerdine 2006: 74–76; Nakassis 2013: 2–3). Geographically, palatial authority was not necessarily contiguous or equally powerful throughout the entire landscape. Instead, the territory appears to be fragmented, and territorial authority operated through relationships between specific people in key posts or statuses, and focused on particular locations in the landscape, fading with distance from the palace.

In the case of Nichoria and other second-order settlements, what elements of the Late Bronze Age archaeological remains that we see might result from palace control, influence or management? What kind of relationships might we see between the palace and Nichoria through the archaeological remains? It is immediately striking how small and unpretentious Nichoria is even at its peak, and the second-order (and other) settlements identified by PRAP are considerably smaller (Bennet 1998: 134). Concomitantly, the great difference in scale between Nichoria and the palace is equally striking. The peak of settlement at Nichoria (LH IIIA) seems to predate the peak of the palace and its accompanying lower town (LH IIIB). Does this mean that officials and some of the elite population lived in, and perhaps moved to, the palace and the lower town at this time?

The one identifiably elite house in Nichoria (IV-4A, Figure 24.3a) had at least five rooms with a second story, but it can hardly be considered palatial, even though it shares features

of palatial style architecture. This does not look like a building where a bevy of administrators were living, but seems more like one elite household, not necessarily a very large one. It seems probable that the occupants were connected to or working for the palace authorities. Yet, it seems equally possible that at least some members of this household did not live in Nichoria permanently but dwelt part or full time at the palace or in the associated lower town. The elite tombs, however, especially the LH IIIB *tholos*, may suggest that these people were buried locally, near their home settlement. This may suggest an elite cultural identity within the local community and landscape, at least in part for the purposes of maintaining local relationships and a regional power base.

UNIT IV-4A, RECONSTRUCTED PLAN

UNIT IV-4A, RECONSTRUCTED PLAN

0 1 2 4 8

Walls: wall A, wall B, wall C, wall D, wall E, wall F, wall G, wall H, wall I, wall J, wall K, wall L, wall M, wall N, wall O, wall P, wall Q, wall R, wall S, wall T, wall U, wall V, wall W, wall X, wall Y, wall Z, wall Ca, wall C3, wall J, wall X.

Features: paved circle, pit hearth, stone base, side entrance, main entrance, mudbrick 1, mudbrick 2, mudbrick 3.

Rooms: ROOM 1, ROOM 2.

Scale: 0 1 2 4 8

North arrow: N

UNIT IV-1 RECONSTRUCTED PLAN PHASE 1

Diagram showing the reconstructed plan of Unit IV-1, Phase 1. The plan includes a scale bar (0 to 8) and a north arrow. The structure consists of three rooms (Room 1, Room 2, Room 3) and a central courtyard. Key features include walls A through H, a paved circle, stone bases, storage pits, and mudbrick structures. The plan is labeled with various points (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z) and includes a legend for 'stone base' and 'storage pits'.

Figure 24.3. Nichoria: (a) Unit IV-4A, Bronze Age elite house; (b) Unit IV-1, Iron Age ‘chief’s house’, phase 1; (c)

Unit IV-1, Iron Age 'chief's house', phase 2 (courtesy of the University of Minnesota Press).

Both the construction and the modifications of the more modest Nichoria houses all seem to have had their own trajectory, and were not coordinated. The speed of change and phasing appears quite rapid within units, within a few generations between LH IIIA1-LH IIIA2-LH IIIB. Sometimes the orientation of houses changes slightly from one phase to another, but many remain in the same spot in one form or another over the whole period of 200 years or so (e.g. Units II-7, II-6). Decisions on construction and modification appear to be purely household based: there is no evidence for the interference of central or local authorities in the actual work of house building and remodelling (e.g. the presence of uniform masonry built all at once). Nonetheless, the masonry techniques are quite expert (and far less variable than Iron Age building work), perhaps suggesting access to expert builders, although there are many variations in house forms and building techniques. The occasional child burials within settlements also suggest household/family management of the physical space of individual houses. Despite the poor preservation of the architecture, however, the separateness of houses is also interesting: there is no evidence of agglutinative or clustered settlement, the substantial growth of houses over time, or the combining or division of houses, all of which might suggest family or household-based succession over several generations.

Who put the people in these houses? The Linear B documents suggest that palace authorities may have had some impact (Shelmerdine 2006: 76), along with the elites (probably) of local origin in charge of managing the *damos*. Could we therefore be looking at a physical arrangement suggesting that households had responsibility for organisation and modification of household space, but most at least had no (or only limited) rights of succession? Were lands linked to houses? Could such tenure arrangements partly explain the complete abandonment of Nichoria upon the collapse of the palace authority around 1200 BC, if some

people had family origins and affiliations elsewhere and only superficial relationships to this particular elite local family?

The cultivators of lands around the settlement must have been inhabitants of Nichoria during the Bronze Age, given the lack of outlying small sites. Yet, it is interesting that there is little evidence for archaeologically visible processing facilities or extensive storage areas beyond the levels needed for household use in the actual settlement. While it is possible that the elite house IV-4A had large storage facilities, there does not seem to be much in the way of, for example, *pithos* sherds that would suggest exceptionally large storage areas. Any storage on site, therefore, must have been quite short term, and perhaps may have consisted mostly of sack-stacking space. Could this suggest, for example, that collection of grain for the palace took place in the fields, perhaps at the threshing floor, from where it was transported to the big house for a short time then rapidly sent on to the palace?

Finally, what were the human relationships behind the visible archaeological remains? It seems most likely from the combined evidence of the texts and the material culture that the palace created some kind of relationship, perhaps clientage and/or a marriage/kinship link to local families in the *damoi*. This would provide an easy way, embedded in social relationships, to ensure the delivery of goods and labour, and to provide the informed oversight and management of the local area. But were at least some of the local inhabitants clients of palace authorities or administrators directly, rather than only being clients of local elites? This might have been a good strategy for the palace to prevent prominent local families from developing too secure a regional power base of their own, one that might challenge their authority. The evidence from LH IIIB and the demise of the palace and its territorial reach at the end of the period suggests that there must have been considerable tensions between local and central power during the period.

Messenia and Nichoria in the Postpalatial

Period and the Iron Age

After the demise of the palace at Pylos at the end of LH IIIB, around 1200 BC, the ways in which households and communities engaged with the Messenian landscape changed radically. Except for a small amount of early Iron Age activity on the palace site (Griebel and Nelson 1998), the palace itself was abandoned, and there is little evidence for any substantial continuity of settlement (Harrison and Spencer 1998: 148–49). A couple of LH IIIC *kylix* stems from the area around the palace have been found. There is a small group of Submycenaean through Geometric sherds concentrated in a small area just south of the site fence, beyond the Southwestern Building, and 14 Geometric sherds have been recovered from a wider area around the palace (Davis *et al.* 1997: 423–24). Only a few other sites in the PRAP survey area had Submycenaean-Geometric material, and even by the Late Geometric period (eighth century BC), there were but a few nucleated settlements, notably K01 (Gargaliani Ordines) and B07 (the palace), and only limited traces of rural activity. Clearly, such inhabitants as remained in the area confined themselves to small villages and cultivated only the nearest and best agricultural land (Davis *et al.* 1997: 452–53; Alcock *et al.* 2005: 165; Foxhall 2013).

After the fall of the palace, the focus of settlement in Messenia moved towards Nichoria, following an initial phase of abandonment of about a century. The Iron Age (called ‘Dark Age’ by the excavators) phase of the settlement began as several clusters of Dark Age I (1075–975 BC) occupation across the site (perhaps kin/family based?), with the main cluster in area IV. This sector of the site eventually became the core of the Dark Age II (975–850 BC) and III (850–750 BC) settlements. At its peak in the Dark Age II phase, the settlement consisted of about 40 one-roomed houses, and by Dark Age III, it had shrunk to about half this size. In the Iron Age phases, house walls were much more variable than the LH house walls, often built directly on the foundations of the Bronze Age houses, recycling worn, rounded limestone blocks originating from them (Walsh and McDonald 1992: 458).

Area IV contained the 'chief's house', notably in the same sector of the site as the one elite house of the Mycenaean period (McDonald *et al.* 1983: 57–58; Mazarakis-Ainian 1997: 74–80) (Figure 24.3b and c). This house (IV-1/IV-5), built of wattle and daub and supported by posts, was much modified and expanded in its second phase around 850–800 BC. An apse was added to the original, more or less rectangular structure to include substantial storage facilities; a large paved circle with possible ritual functions was made more prominent; a new entrance was added on the northern side and a courtyard area was added on the eastern end. Most of the material found in the house suggested a domestic assemblage (60% coarse wares, 40% fine wares) (McDonald *et al.* 1983: 19–33). This was probably the only house on the site with permanently fixed cooking facilities. The size and special features of this house, along with the fact that the only metal finds on the Iron Age phases of the site were discovered in it, suggests that an elite household inhabited it. Especially in its larger second phase, the building may also have hosted communal events such as feasting (suggested by the relatively large number of animal bones) and/or religious ritual, although it is difficult to be certain of this. Evidence is less strong for the architectural history of other Iron Age houses, but there certainly seems to be an increase in house numbers and settlement density in Area IV over time, whatever the precise spatial organisation.

It would seem that, like the LH settlement, the Iron Age settlement at Nichoria came to be dominated by one elite family or household, although precisely what the relationship of this elite group was to other households in the settlement is difficult to ascertain. Even at its peak, the Iron Age settlement was much smaller than in the Bronze Age. Unlike their LH predecessors, the Iron Age inhabitants preferred one-roomed houses: even the 'chief's house' is one-roomed, albeit a very large one, and when it was expanded, it still fundamentally consisted of one large room for household living space, with a storeroom and court added on. The ordinary houses are poorly preserved and most are not fully excavated, which may partially explain why new households appear to have built new houses rather than

adding on to old ones.

Apart from the Mycenaean street which remained in use, decisions about how and where to build appears to have been made by individual households: there is no indication of regular, coordinated or coerced planning. The site was not fortified in this period, so security would not appear to be the obvious reason why settlement remained tightly nucleated. Yet, over time, the village became more clustered around the 'chief's house'. While this is distinctly different from the Cretan tradition of 'agglutinative' building (see below), this trend may suggest that the builders of new houses in Area IV had some kind of sociopolitical relationship to the occupants of the big house. Whether this relationship involved kinship, clientage, community identity or all of these is uncertain, but it encouraged households to choose to build on locations close to it. The agricultural exploitation of the landscape from the village must have concentrated on the abundant, nearby, high-quality farmland, since there is no evidence of any isolated rural settlement at this time. Although it has been argued that the community became more 'pastoral' in the Iron Age, the archaeobotanical remains include all of the common subsistence cultigens, so this view is not now widely accepted (Dickinson 2006: 98–101). It could be that we are seeing the return of the *damos* as it was before the rise of later Bronze Age palatial states (Deger-Jalkotzy 2008: 403). Yet, it seems more likely that we have here a new kind of community, one in which households conceptualised themselves, their living space and their relationship to the wider productive landscape quite differently than in the Bronze Age, even if later Greeks appear to have inherited some of the old terminology.

East Crete

The Wider Context

The settlement history of Late Bronze Age Crete, and the relationships between different kinds of settlements and activity areas in the landscape, are quite different from those

of mainland Greece. There has been a long and continuing debate on the role of Knossos, by far the largest and most impressive palace site. Did it hold sway over the entire island, or did it lead one polity among a number of others, and did this change in different periods (Younger and Rehak 2008: 150–52; Wallace 2010: 42–44; Vansteenhuyse 2011)? More importantly for the argument here, we also find a wider range of different types of settlements, both across the island and within specific regions: the relationships between settlements and political geography seem to have been generally more varied and complex than on the mainland. During the Neopalatial period (approximately Middle Minoan [MM] II–Late Minoan [LM] IB, with regional variations, ca. 1800–1450 BC), we see the rise of larger and smaller ‘palaces’ across the island, many of which, like Knossos, had substantial adjacent towns. However, there were also small towns and village-type settlements, large elite houses generally called ‘villas’ and small rural farmsteads (Younger and Rehak 2008: 141–46; Gkiasta 2008: 212–14). During the Third Palace Period (LM II–IIIB, around 1450–1200 BC), Greek became the language of administrative documents at Knossos, and its political role within the island may have changed, at least for a time, while the material culture of the island was more widely influenced by mainland Greece (Preston 2008: 310–12).

During the Iron Age, Crete also has a completely different settlement history from that of mainland Greece, lacking the profound rural abandonment we see in the Peloponnese and elsewhere. After the final collapse of palatial culture and administration starting shortly after 1200 BC, a number of small settlements arose, and at present about 120 of these are known. Many were located in relatively inaccessible places but generally near good agricultural land (Wallace 2010: 54). The impact of this development is that a completely different relationship between households and landscape developed in Crete.

The Mirabello Bay Region

The area of east Crete adjacent to Mirabello Bay has been

particularly well explored through archaeological survey and excavation (Figure 24.4a and b). The substantial town of Gournia was the largest settlement in the later Bronze Age, and has some kind of large elite dwelling that possibly served as a 'palace' (Soles 1991), although it is much smaller than other palaces on Crete. Palace or not, the town must have served as the major political and economic centre for the region. The total size of the Late Minoan town may have been up to 4 ha, although the excavated area on the acropolis covers only about 1.5 ha (Soles 1991: 74).

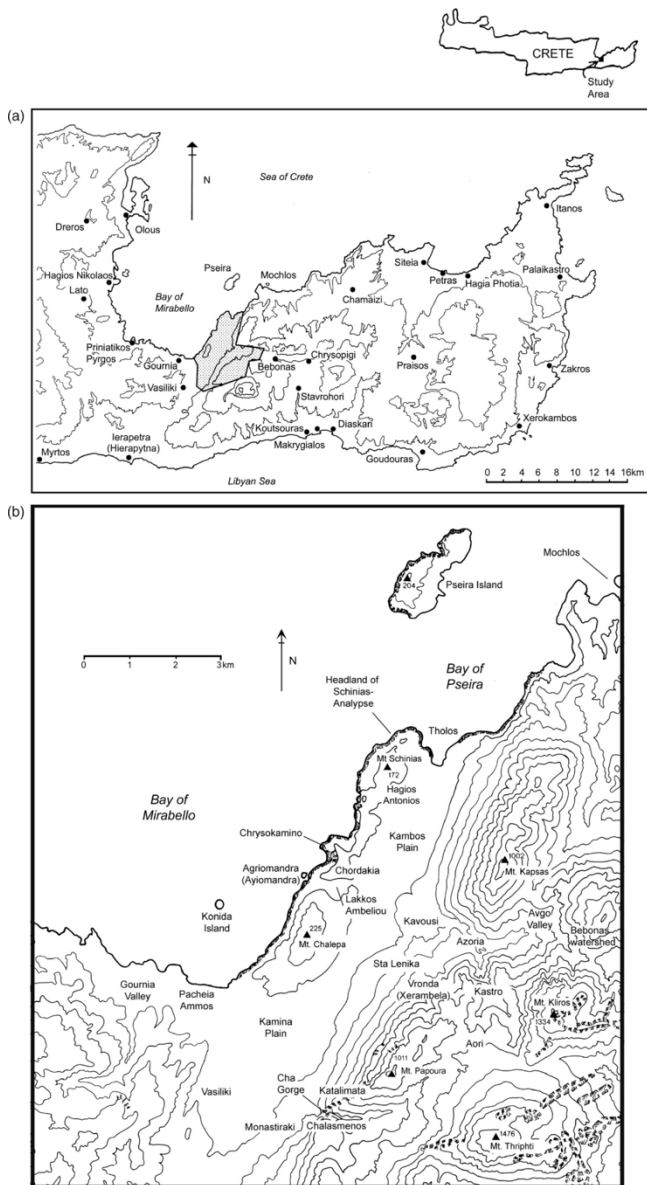


Figure 24.4. (a) Map of east Crete; (b) map of Mirabello Bay sites (courtesy of Donald Haggis).

The smaller ‘town’ of Pseira to the east reached its peak population in LM IB, when it was rebuilt after its destruction at the end of MM III. At this time, the settlement consisted of

about 60 houses (Betancourt 2005: 291). Pseira was destroyed in LM IB, only thinly occupied in LM II, with further reoccupation in LM III, but never reaching the population levels of LM I. This settlement was destroyed by fire in LM IIIB and subsequently abandoned. Settlement moved away from the coast more generally at this time (Betancourt 2005: 294–95). The nearby town of Mochlos was quite substantial in size during its LM I phase, but was destroyed by fire at the end of LM IB. A small LM III settlement reoccupied the site (Soles and Davaras 1989: 418; 1994; 1996: 210).

The diversity and density of rural settlement has been well documented by the Kavousi survey, covering an area that includes excavated sites at Vronda, Kavousi Kastro, Azoria and Chrysokamino to the east. The Kavousi sites lie about 6–7 km from Gournia, and about 10 km from Mochlos, while the rural farmhouse at Chrysokamino is situated less than 10 km distant from Gournia and about 6 km from Mochlos (Wallace 2010: 63, fig. 12). Helpfully, there is a continuous archaeological record between prehistoric and historical times covering the Late Bronze Age–Iron Age transition. Settlement hierarchy in the region and the relationships between different kinds of settlements appear to have been quite complex (Betancourt 2006b: 270).

Rural settlement on small sites generally appears to expand in MM times, probably as clusters of farmsteads or hamlets (Haggis 2002; 2005: 40; 2006: 230–31; 2007: 707). A decrease in rural site numbers in LM I (to 41 sites) appears to coincide with the growth of towns and larger villages where elites (and others) congregated (Haggis 2005: 41; 2006: 229). These nucleated settlements appear to reach their peak in LM I, while at this time Haggis also notes more diversity in different types of settlements, including large farmsteads/‘villas’, hamlets, larger villages/small towns. Indeed, isolated rural houses seem to be an LM phenomenon in contrast to the Early Minoan [EM]–MM pattern of clustered settlements (Haggis 2005: 40–41). By LM IIIA–B, there is even less rural settlement, with only 10 sites recorded, most of which appear to be single houses,

reflecting the disruptions after the LM IB–II destructions. In the following sections, I focus specifically on two of these rural houses, to address the questions of how and why they were located where they are, and what this tells us about their autonomy, or lack of it, in the wider context of the territory and its complex settlement hierarchy.

There are two substantial excavated farmsteads in the region: Chrysokamino (Kavousi) and Chalinomouri (Mochlos). For both, excavation and microlevel studies have been carried out on the houses themselves and in their immediate vicinity; they are situated in a wider area that has been well explored and where the settlement history is relatively well understood. These seem to be neither small-scale ‘subsistence’ farms nor elite ‘villa’ sites that might have served as the headquarters for a large estate. Built as single structures, ones that were modified over time, they do not accumulate extra rooms or units. The occupation and character of both seems to be dependent on the geopolitics of settlement trends elsewhere in the region.

Both sites appear to have traces of MM occupation that was obliterated during the LM phases. Both also have LM I and LM III phases, but the character and chronology of the occupation appear to be somewhat different, and the two phases are not linked. It is probably the case that neither of these sites was occupied continuously in each phase for more than 100 years (a few generations). At Chrysokamino, located some way inland and at a higher elevation, the LM III phase appears to be bigger, better preserved and quite differently oriented from the LM IB phase, arising as it did during a period of general settlement nucleation in the area (Floyd 2006: 205, 209; Haggis 2006: 231). At Chalinomouri, on the eastern end of the Mochlos coastal plain, the LM I phase is the most important, and LM III reoccupation is significantly smaller and more casual (Soles and Davaras 1996: 207–10; Soles 2003: 103–32). This seems to be in line with the abandonment of the coastal plain area and the decline of the larger coastal settlements during LM III.

Chalinomouri

This house is located on a defensible promontory above the coast (Figure 24.5). Terracing explored in the area to the northeast may suggest modification in the immediate vicinity of the site for intensive farming, and certainly suggests access to a significant amount of labour, if these terraces are indeed LM I in date. It is clear from nearby Pseira that labour was available at this time for landscape modifications aimed at intensifying agriculture during LM I, where dams to slow winter run-off water in seasonal rivers and agricultural terraces dating fairly securely to LM I have been carefully excavated (Betancourt 2005: 290–91; Hope Simpson *et al.* 2005: 251–62).

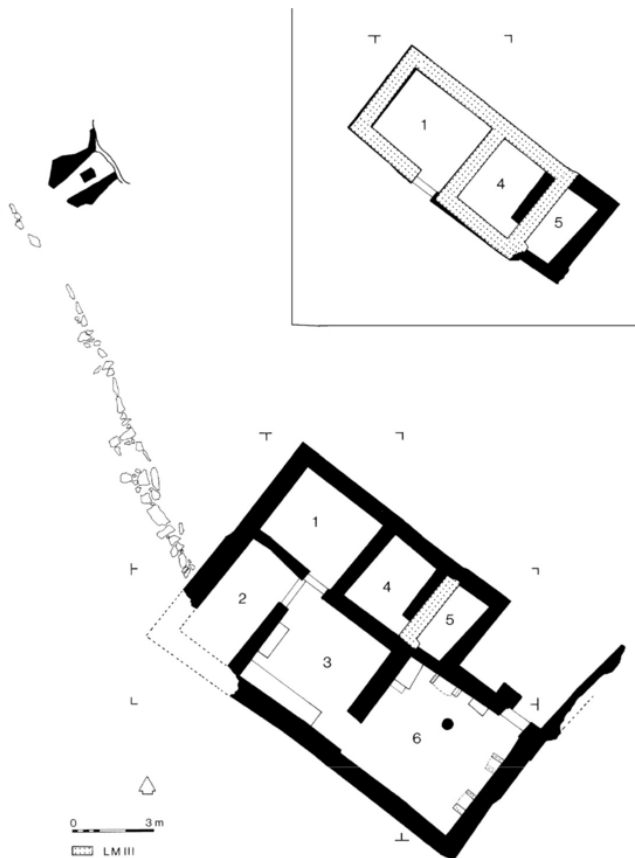


Figure 24.5. Chalinomouri farmhouse plan (courtesy of the INSTAP Academic Press).

The building at Chalinomouri measures overall 8.5×14 m and contained seven to eight rooms. Rooms 3 and 6 appear to be the main activity rooms, fitted with benches against the walls, and with evidence of cooking and eating in both. Room 6 is the largest and seems to be a multipurpose workspace. There is evidence of a range of activities including agricultural processing and food preparation (quern, pestle), considerable food storage (at least eight *pithoi* and other large storage jars, especially Rooms 1–2), and the manufacture of green serpentine vases (Rooms 1–2) exploiting a source of raw materials close to the house (Soles and Davaras 1994: 427–28; 1996: 207–10). Faunal remains include sheep, goat (one dog chewed) and pigs in the LM IB period, while cattle bones appear only in LM IIIB. Botanical remains include almond, fig, olive, vine, fenugreek, legumes and cereal weeds. Olive and almond fragments were recovered from hearths, suggesting that olive press cake and nut shells were probably used as fuel (Soles 2003: 128). The pottery all appears to come from Mochlos, and Soles and Davaras consider it to be a ‘third-order’ site dependent on the ‘second-order’ settlement of Mochlos.

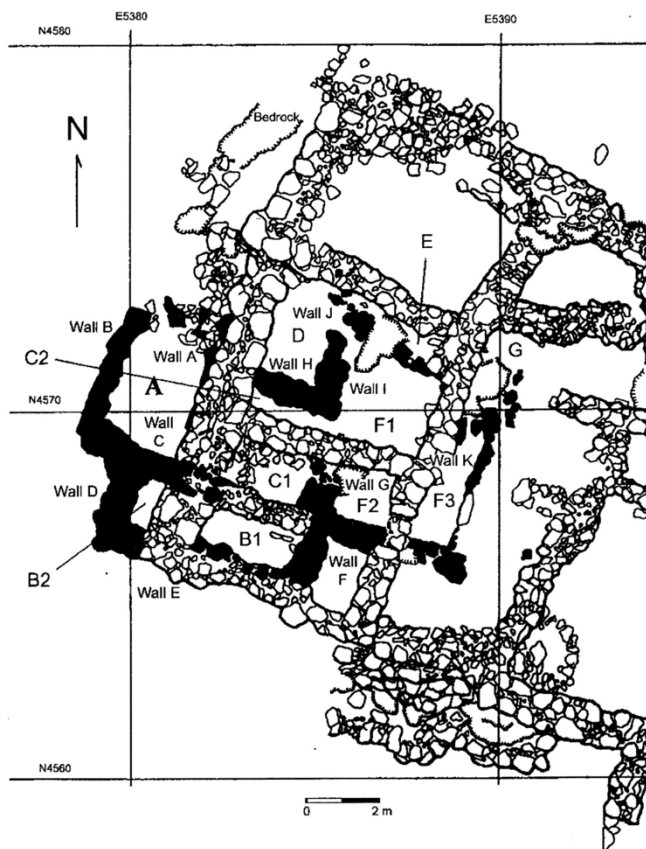
The LM I house certainly looks like a place occupied by a household in regular contact with the main town, but there is no indication from the material culture that it was an elite dwelling. It seems possible that the inhabitants could be dependents of higher status town dwellers. The amount of storage looks too great merely for household subsistence, suggesting the production of substantial agricultural surpluses of some kind. The evidence of skilled craftwork may suggest lower status persons of some kind living on the premises: this is certainly an activity that depends on a pool of wealthier consumers located in a nucleated settlement.

What was the point of siting a farmhouse here and not simply exploiting the local resources from the town? Was it visited regularly by higher-status owners? Were decisions about the particular activities to be performed here made by the inhabitants? The answer is most likely no, or at least not entirely. Certainly decisions about how to organise activities on a day-to-day basis probably were decided by the

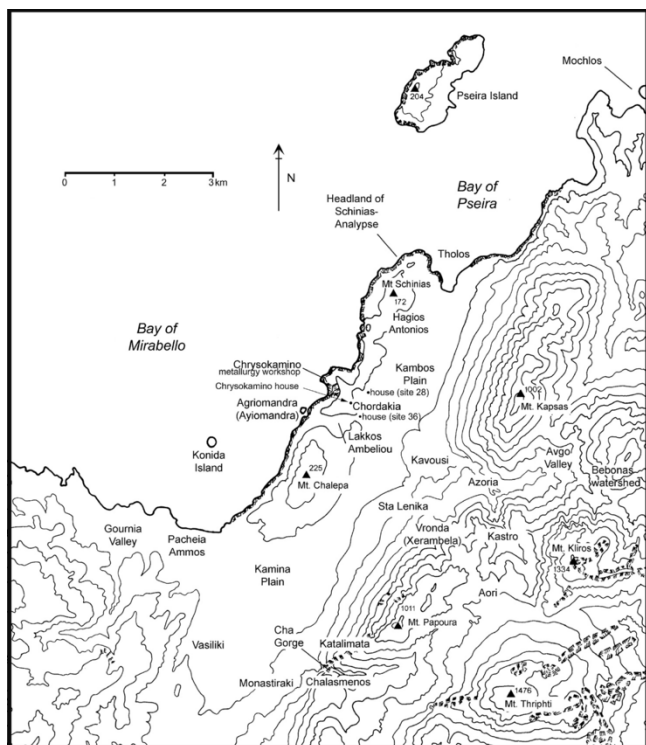
occupants: these could have been specialist craftsmen who were also farmers, integrating these two different activities depending on seasonality, weather, etc. One possible reason for situating a house in this particular location, however, might be to lay claim to a specific resource, green serpentine; occupation of the site might have had legal or political significance in relation to that resource and might also have restricted other people's access to it. If the fate of inhabitants at Chalinomouri was tied to the geopolitics of Mochlos town, in combination with the availability of a specific resource, the decline of the site in tandem with the decline of the town is not altogether surprising. There is no indication, however, that any larger, elite-occupied centre in the region (such as Gournia, not far distant) exerted 'control of territory' over the site, directly or indirectly.

Chrysokamino

The different size and orientation of the superimposed LM I and LM III buildings at Chrysokamino ([Figure 24.6a](#)) may suggest different and unconnected reasons for the existence of a farm headquarters here in different periods. The LM III structure, which represents the best-preserved and most extensive phase, may be more independent of neighbouring larger settlements and more self-contained. Yet, it still clearly has links to other places, as indicated by the find of a sealstone, suggesting links to administrative networks. This may be a higher status dwelling than the Chalinomouri house, but the household could have included members of multiple statuses, and it certainly does not qualify as a 'villa' of the type that one would expect to find as the headquarters of a very large estate.



(a) Chrysokamino farmhouse plan (courtesy of Philip Betancourt).



(b) Chrysokamino farmhouse location map, indicating other nearby farmhouse sites (courtesy of Philip Betancourt).

Figure 24.6.

Certainly, this is a significantly larger building with more rooms, although the plan is similar in overall conception, with one large general workspace room (10) and two rows of smaller rooms behind (1, 2, 3, 6, 7). It is possible that the ‘channels pecked into rock’ (Floyd 2006: 211) are vestiges of or related to pressing or other kinds of agricultural processing installations. The material assemblage seems to be generally domestic, perhaps with more elite items than we see at Chalinomouri (e.g. a bronze jug). There is also some evidence of cult space and practice. Yet, there is no serious evidence of activities other than household maintenance (cooking, eating, storage vessels) and agriculture (chisel, knife, pounders, rubbers, querns; Floyd 2006: 212), and the storage facilities do not seem to be as extensive as at Chalinomouri (e.g. there is no mention of

numerous *pithoi*). This is interesting, since the primary attraction of the site appears to be the presence of good agricultural land (Betancourt 2006a: 241; Haggis 2006: 229–30). There is also no specific evidence of craft production. Nothing at this site suggests that decisions about immediate landscape and its use or modification were taken or carried out by any agent except the household itself, which appears to be relatively autonomous.

In terms of the wider setting of the house, the building here seems to increase in importance as the town declines, and careful investigation of background sherd counts in the nearby fields certainly suggests that area around the building was being carefully cultivated. Selective manuring of terra rossa soils close to the house (which need more manure than phyllitic soils) has been inferred, correctly in my view, from high counts of small, eroded ‘background’ sherds. The excavators suggest this indicates the use of these fertilised fields for gardens, but vines seem to be at least as likely, since they demand intensive work throughout the year and are thus more conveniently located close to the house (the modern name of one of these areas, Lakkos Ambeliou, the ‘viney hole’, might be suggestive).

Chrysokamino, however, was not necessarily ‘in control of’ or cultivating a continuous block of territory as the excavators believed, although Betancourt (2006c: 238–39) acknowledged that areas such as those for grazing might have been shared territory. The nearly 69 ha area suggested as the ‘territory’ of the house by Onyshkevych and Hafford (2006: 204) seems wildly unrealistic, given the number of people it would take to cultivate or even control it in any sense (even allowing for grazing etc.) (cf. Foxhall 2003). Rather it seems more likely that the occupants of the house would have occupied and used bits of the surrounding landscape selectively. It also seems probable that some of this area ‘belonged’ in one sense or another to other agents, either inhabitants of nearby nucleated settlements or of other rural houses. There are two other ‘farmhouses’ located close by this site documented in survey (Figure 24.6b), but the relation to Chrysokamino farmhouse is unknown, as are

the ways the land between them might have been used (Betancourt 2006c: 239 and fig. 20.2). More importantly, we do not know the extent to which occupation at all these sites was simultaneous or overlapped, and whether the occupants were in contact with each other. It is also impossible to tell in the LM III phase how this site related to other settlement sites, especially since larger towns were all in decline at this time, though village sites continued.

In sum, despite many similarities of form and occupational phases, these two rural houses are rather different in character, and their occupants shaped their surroundings in quite different ways. The Chrysokamino house was perhaps more independent a household than the one at Chalinomouri, better situated to shape its own landscape and uses of space, but not inhabited by upper-echelon elites. In Chalinomouri, decision making may have been more divided between different agents. The choice about where to locate the Chalinomouri house was not necessarily that of the inhabitants, and may have been strongly influenced by the availability of a specific resource (green serpentine) and the desire to stake some sort of claim to it.

Chrysokamino, however, was situated on a site whose attraction was agricultural, one which had already been the headquarters for cultivation on and off for hundreds of years. Thus although both of these houses have links to larger settlements, in neither case do such links appear to lead directly to the highest level elites in the region who, logically, ought to be situated in Gournia, at least during LM I. Instead, the clearest and most direct links would appear to be with agents located in much smaller towns and settlements. This could suggest that both the complex settlement hierarchies we see in the archaeological record, and the administrative structures in which they were embedded, were highly personalised. These were not simply faceless bureaucracies, nor was territory enacted as depersonalised political control continuously over space directly from elites in urban centres. Rather, in these relatively small communities of east Crete, elites and lower

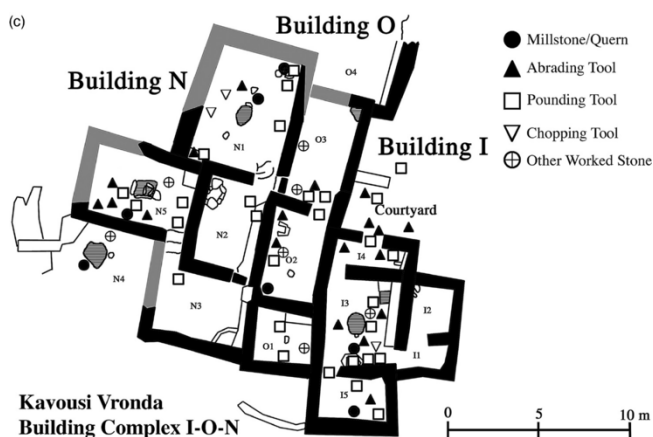
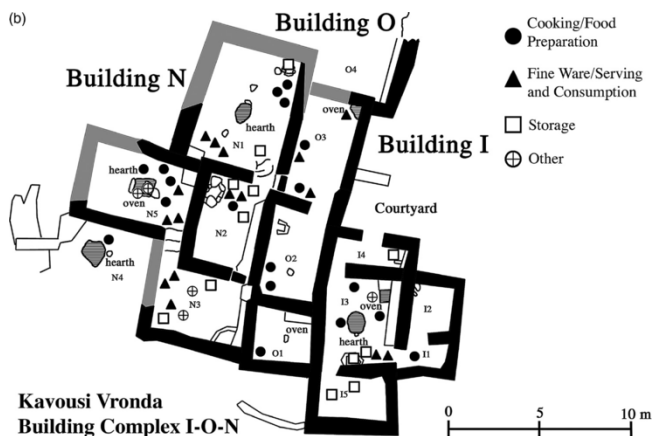
status individuals and households must have been bound together in a complex web of politicised social relationships, through which a range of different agents shaped spaces and landscapes.

LM IIIC–EIA Changes

In the Kavousi area, resettlement in the LM IIIA–B (ca. 1350–1200 BC) phase continues at a steady rate during LM IIIC (ca. 1200–1180 BC) (Haggis 1993: 143; 2005: 41), but sites move inland and upward, and become larger and more nucleated. Single farmhouses disappear from the archaeological record. Sites appear to be organised in clusters, which Haggis (1993) has suggested are probably family based. If this interpretation is correct, however, and in the context of the LM I–III background this seems a logical inference, then it is probably also the case that people from sites within and between these clusters (which are quite close together) were intermarrying. This might lead to a fragmented, rather patchwork agrarian landscape as land (or access to it) was divided and recombined as it passed from one generation to the next.

Within sites, houses were also clustered (Haggis 1993: 143–49; Wallace 2010: 63–66) and the ‘agglutinative growth’ of settlements, where new units are built on to existing units, becomes characteristic in many places (Wallace 2010: 108–12). Some sites like Azoria may have been inhabited continuously from LM IIIC to the early seventh century BC (Haggis 2007: 696). But on other sites settlement comes and goes, as at Kavousi Vronta, which began in LM IIIC then was largely abandoned at the end of the period, after which the site was used mainly as a cemetery from Late Geometric times (eighth century BC) down to the early seventh century BC when it was completely abandoned (Gesell *et al.* 1995: 116; Preston Day *et al.* 2009).

At the Kavousi Vronta site, ordinary houses have two to five rooms connected by doorways, with one main large room and the rest smaller. Each house appears to have its own hearth, and benches, pot-stands and ovens also appear



(b) Buildings I-O-N, pottery distribution; (c) Buildings I-O-N, worked stone distribution (courtesy of the INSTAP Academic Press, Leslie Day, the Kavousi Project and Kevin Glowaki).

Figure 24.7.

House plans for Houses C, D, I, O and N are relatively complete, and it is possible to zoom in on the agglutinative growth of the settlement. Glowacki (2004: 128–31) has analysed building sequences in detail for the group of houses I-O-N, including plotting the distribution of pottery (Figure 24.7b) and worked stone (Figure 24.7c). Building I starts as a three-room structure (Rooms I4, I3, I5) with total interior area of 31.3 m²: basically a one-roomed house with small porch in front and storeroom at back (with at least two *pithoi* in I5). Cooking and other main activities took place in Room

I3, which has a fixed hearth, oven and bench along with pottery for cooking and dining, as well as one *pithos* and a selection of pounding, rubbing, chopping and grinding stone tools. Rooms I1 and I2 (total 8.49 m²) were added later. Animal bones were found largely in the courtyard to the north of the house (mostly sheep/goat, but also pig, cow rabbit/hare); their condition and appearance in this area suggest that they were butchery debris.

The original excavators suggested that this developmental pattern was 'linked to family or social groups' (Gesell *et al.* 1995: 116). Indeed, it certainly seems to mirror the reproduction of households over time, where adult children build additions to a parental home and a loosely familial extended kin cluster develops (Glowacki 2004: 134). Such patterns of residential development are documented in the Mediterranean at many different times and places from antiquity to the present (see Forbes 2007: 287–314; Foxhall 2009: 498–500). In particular, it appears to be a physical and spatial manifestation of kin-focused, household-based societies in which inheritance is partible, and an original household spawns several new ones in the next generation by dividing property and other resources among children or other heirs. Although it is not so easily visible in the archaeological record, it is likely that these households similarly imprinted themselves on the agrarian and wild landscapes they exploited.

Although these small early Iron Age sites are defensible, with many being quite inaccessible, all have good agricultural land in the vicinity (Wallace 2010: 59–60). Houses were much smaller than in the Bronze Age, suggesting smaller household units and possibly less status differentiation within the household. Buildings are much more similar in size across different settlements. In many of these communities, one or more houses may be larger than the rest, suggesting that there were still significant social/status differences within the community (Wallace 2010: 114–16), but there is no indication that they had much impact on the use of space within the settlement.

Communities appear to be made up of relatively autonomous households (Glowacki 2004: 134), at least in terms of taking decisions about organising the space available to them, although we cannot be certain about what social or political obligations or relationships bound them to such elite families as there were.

Agglutinative building patterns within settlements suggest that individual household reproduction and decisions were the major factor in settlement growth and construction, which must also have been reflected in the agrarian and productive landscape, with the clustering of sites. In such a political landscape, with the apparent absence of any large-scale centralised authority, the 'territory' of any particular settlement must have consisted for the most part of the aggregate of household decisions for shaping the space to which they had access. Given the proximity of communities to each other in the 'clusters' identified by Haggis, it seems probable that in some sense the 'territories' of communities overlapped and were interwoven in a network of kinship and property holding enacted by households.

Conclusions

In later Bronze Age and Iron Age Crete and Greece, households and their social practices over time had completely different impacts on both built and agrarian rural landscapes. In both areas, isolated rural sites emerged as viable entities in the later Bronze Age, but often for different reasons and in different circumstances. In east Crete, the Chrysokamino and the Chalinomouri houses appear to have been built and occupied for quite different reasons. In Messenia, it is clear that the location of isolated rural dwellings had existed under the patronage of local elites who were themselves entangled in complex political relationships with the palatial centre. During the Iron Age, household impact on the landscape and the use of space is barely visible except at Nichoria, where the focus of Dark Age II settlement on one elite house or household might also have been reflected in the agrarian landscape in terms of access to land and productive resources. In east Crete,

however, we seem to see kin-based groups banding together as autonomous but related households in small villages, engaged in a web of relationships across the landscape.

By looking at settlement and landscapes from the point of view of households and how their decisions shape their immediate spaces, we acquire a new perspective on the role of households in larger geospatial, economic and political networks, and thus on the operation of these networks themselves. Frequently, the political and economic landscapes of Bronze Age Greece have been investigated by archaeologists from a top-down perspective, envisaging them as the outcome of the agency of a centralised state. In fact, most of the communities with which we are dealing are quite small in scale, even if they are linked together in complex ways, and relationships between individuals, households and other agents and institutions should not be imagined as being depersonalised. Simultaneously, theories of territory need to be adjusted to accommodate these rather different kinds of states and polities we find in societies such as those of Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Greece.

As recent work in this area by political geographers has shown (Antonsich 2009; Elden 2010), even in the modern world the notion of territory is highly relevant but complex. Many approaches have been too top-down, missing the nuances of interactions and relationships that composed a territory. Many have stressed sovereign power, implying a capability to enforce territorial cohesion greater than even some modern states can manage, let alone states in earlier periods. Other approaches that have emphasised cultural cohesion and identities coterminous with a particular geographical space have come to be viewed as problematic in a multicultural, ethnically fragmented, global world (Antonsich 2009). Conversely, it is clear that 'territory', as the spatial manifestation of a set of complex political relationships acted out, remains as important today as it was in the past. This is not to say that a territory is simply a coherent geopolitical space enclosed by borders. The power to make everyday decisions about space is more dispersed and fragmented, and it is the repeated combination of

choices and actions at many different levels that merge to construct a territory, whose edges might be rather fuzzy, erratic and sometimes unexpected.

In particular, sovereignty appears to operate in a completely different way in the territories of these Bronze Age states: it was spotty and selective, not uniform across space. Therefore we might better envisage territory as the intersection between agents and landscapes as enacted within culturally and historically contingent sociopolitical relationships. How this might play out on the ground in specific contexts will, as we have seen from the case studies presented here, vary radically. The examples of Bronze and Iron Age Greece and Crete offer different but related societies over a long time period when the nature and extent of political authority and relationships, as well as landscapes and the use of space, changed dramatically. By approaching the issue of ‘territory’ and how households operated in landscapes, we can see how they fill the spaces left by more powerful agents with their own decisions, as these other agents come and go.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the incisive comments of Donald Haggis, Bernard Knapp and Stuart Elden, and for the patience of the editors.

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25 Connectivity Beyond the Urban Community in Central Italy

Corinna Riva

Abstract

Two significant recent developments concerning the archaeology of Iron Age central Italy call for a fresh analysis of settlement dynamics in the region and their relations vis-à-vis one another. The first development is the reconsideration of ancient urban centres as single entities, and the need, which has mostly been advocated for the Classical and later historical Mediterranean, to examine the systems or networks within which these centres functioned. The second development is the increasing amount of fieldwork-based research in those regions that have been situated at the margins of scholarly interest. New data from such research increasingly allow us to see the networks or systems that linked these regions to better-known ones on the Tyrrhenian coast. Such developments enable us to reassess the importance traditionally given to the core urban area of central Italy, and to offer a more balanced framework for understanding the exchange dynamics among Iron Age Central Italian communities. This chapter intends to do precisely that, and in so doing, its aim is twofold: first, to decentralise central Italy in line with studies on other Mediterranean regions that have similarly dispelled distinctions between core urban areas and non-urban peripheries; second, to shift attention away from evolutionary and other categories towards a perspective that stresses connectivity and patterns of human mobility.

Introduction

Urbanisation has dominated the scholarship of Iron Age (IA) central Italy over the last 30 years or so (cf. most recently, Sgubini Moretti 2005) to the extent that many studies of first millennium BC Italy have been defined as ‘urbanocentric’ (Bradley 2000: 30). Yet, two significant developments are providing the impetus for a reassessment of settlement dynamics in the region. The first development, which is visible in much recent scholarship on and across the ancient Mediterranean, invites us to reconsider the nature of ancient urban centres as single entities, and, in some cases, minimises the importance of these with evident consequences. A key cause and effect of this re-evaluation, as we shall see, is the eagerly advocated need for the Classical and later historical Mediterranean to examine the systems and networks within which towns functioned and the indissoluble link between the former and the latter. The second development is the increasing amount of fieldwork-based research in those Italian regions that have been situated at the margins of scholarly interest, partly because of their delay in processes of urban formation. New data from such research increasingly allow us to identify and study the networks and systems that linked these regions to the better-known mid-Tyrrhenian region.

With all this in mind, it is now possible to reassess the significance usually given to the core urban area of central Italy, the mid-Tyrrhenian coastal region, and to offer what can be seen as a more balanced framework for understanding the nature of, and exchange dynamics among, IA central Italian communities. The aim of such a reassessment is twofold: first, to decentralise central Italy in line with studies on other Mediterranean regions that have similarly dispelled distinctions between core and peripheral areas; second, to shift attention away from evolutionary categories and other categories stemming from Roman ancient sources towards a perspective that stresses connectivity and patterns of human mobility or, in one phrase, connective mobility (Shaw 2001: 424) and exchange networks through the landscape. Ultimately, such a

perspective positively encourages us to think beyond ethnic boundaries, the identification of which also originates from later ancient sources, yet has determined the archaeological definition of distinct cultural regions in IA Italy (Bradley *et al.* 2007).

Towns, Systems and Networks across the Mediterranean

The unifying feature is not the accident of a nucleated pattern, whether or not this qualifies as urban; it is the intricate and often far-flung engagement with a wider, kaleidoscopic world. (Horden and Purcell 2000: 122)

Connectivity, the core-concept behind the micro-ecological approach that Horden and Purcell developed in their seminal study (2000; see also Harris 2005a) and proposed for a novel way of understanding the long-term history of the Mediterranean, has been hailed as a ‘watershed in the study of antiquity’ (Shaw 2001: 453) by ancient historians, even marking a paradigm shift towards a connectedness model for the study of the Mediterranean as an analytical unit (Malkin 2005; Morris 2005). Despite criticism towards this study from an archaeological viewpoint (van Dommelen 2000), the concept of Mediterranean connectivity has vigorously entered the archaeological literature (Knapp and Blake 2005; Broodbank 2013), demonstrating the value of the connectedness concept in Mediterranean prehistory. Analyses of urbanisation across the IA Mediterranean have not been immune from it either (Cunliffe and Osborne 2005). Indeed, that such a concept began taking shape in the 1980s and sharpened along with the growing literature on globalisation, mobility and related issues in the social and historical sciences (Morris 2005: 31, 37–38) may partly explain why scholars set out to place Mediterranean towns within a theoretically informed framework that stresses interaction and accessibility within town systems or

networks across different cultural regions.

Undoubtedly, therefore, the connectedness concept and ‘network thinking’ has provided a fresh new impetus to the study of towns, at least for a comparative approach to IA urbanisation in the Mediterranean. It has even encouraged comparative thinking of different communities across space, whether urban or not, within questions about the Eurocentric character of Greek ancient history, of which the Greek *polis* constitutes a key concept (Vlassopoulos 2007a). Yet, it is a paradox, though perhaps only deceptively so, that the concepts of Mediterranean connectivity and micro-ecology have in fact minimised, if not outright undermined, the significance of towns. Indeed, Horden and Purcell deem definitions of towns unsatisfactory because based on arbitrarily estimated proportions of criteria such as size and population density (Horden and Purcell 2000: 92–96), they accordingly dismiss urban typologies and theories because it is impossible to recognise ‘the essence of Mediterranean urbanism’ (Horden and Purcell 2000: 101). Ultimately, their intention is to eradicate the concept of town altogether and replace it with the features and characteristics of Mediterranean settlements identified ‘...less as separate and clearly definable entities and more as loci of contact or overlap between different ecologies’ (Horden and Purcell 2000: 100). The most vociferous criticism of this perspective has come from ancient historians (Shaw 2001: 444–47; Harris 2005b: 29–34), which is perhaps unsurprising given that Horden and Purcell’s focus on towns remains largely historical both in respect of the examples they use and the historiographical tradition they wish to challenge (Horden and Purcell 2000: 91). On the other hand – and this is where the paradox appears to be deceptive – this debate around towns has influenced the Mediterranean Iron Age in so far as the ‘wider, kaleidoscopic world’ referred to above is concerned. Other elements of the debate, namely the ecological interaction between centres of production and centres of consumption and other types of dynamic relationships between settlements, have always been central themes of archaeological enquiry informed by survey evidence and Mediterranean landscape analysis, and have

therefore not produced a visible effect on such an enquiry (cf. van Dommelen 2000: 233; Osborne 2005: 4). IA central Italy is no exception to this. This is attested by the vast amount of survey archaeology and landscape studies that have allowed scholars to build a coherent account of human and cultural landscapes in the region over the last four decades. However, other, what we might call conceptual, issues of the debate are yet to have an impact on such an account. These issues entail the questioning and ultimate refutation of an urban core–non-urban periphery perspective and, in view of that, the drive to decentralise the centre, the urban core.

Challenging this perspective is precisely the emphasis on Mediterranean connectivity and micro-ecologies as driving the system within which towns existed. This system is fluid not only ecologically but also conceptually. Hence, not only is the distinction between types of settlement – urban, non-urban, rural – negligible, but the notion of central place itself becomes questionable at best (Horden and Purcell 2000: 102–105). The value of theories and methods for the identification of central places and of settlement hierarchies, many of which have driven archaeological enquiries on urban formation in IA central Italy, as we shall see, is firmly called in doubt because of their underlying ‘systematic and mathematical approach’, leading to a static picture of the fluid and dynamic nature of Mediterranean settlements (Horden and Purcell 2000: 104). In parallel to this and originating in post-colonial thought, network thinking does not exclude the existence of hierarchical relationships across space, but compellingly problematises these relationships and considers their dynamism (Constantakopoulou 2007; Malkin 2011), even within world-system historical perspectives (Vlassopoulos 2007a: 144–45, 168–70; 2007b; 2007c: 16–17). This is also the case with analyses of ancient imperial growth and expansion in which the emphasis is on the dynamic interaction between centres and frontier zones (Glatz 2009; cf. Constantakopoulou 2007: 61–89). Recent studies on trade have similarly moved away from core–periphery relationships while focusing more productively on the multi-directional flows of goods and the social identities

and power relations that drive and are themselves shaped by these flows (Foxhall 1998; Bauer and Agbe-Davis 2010). This appears to be a frontal assault on the entire framework within which past and present scholarship has investigated urban formation in IA central Italy. Yet, unlike the attacks of the historical ‘consumer city’ model and urban types, so resolutely resisted by ancient historians (Shaw 2001: 444–47), it has remained virtually undisputed since its inception.

Besides mere lack of scholarly communication, silence over this attack may indicate that such sharp positions are deemed as too extreme and irreconcilable with scholarship of the Italian Iron Age. Yet, these positions reflect a wider trend that is leading others to challenge core-periphery models in respect to the development of towns. The widening of this trend is most distinctively visible in archaeological and historical studies of the Archaic and later Greek world, which has long been practically coterminous with the *polis* and ancient urbanisation and urbanism (Brock and Hodkinson 2000; Morgan 2003; Vlassopoulos 2007a; 2007b; 2007c). Archaeological studies specifically devoted to the ‘margins of the *polis* world’ in the Greek early Iron Age and Archaic period (Morgan 2003: 2) ultimately focus upon political communities and their identities. In so doing, they have drawn attention to the variety of the latter and have dismissed the *ethnos-polis* distinction as a product of the thinking of later Greek written sources and the modern historian’s retrojection of this ancient thinking upon earlier material evidence (Morgan 2003). A similar attempt for IA central Italy has not raised sufficient interest, possibly because of its focus on later Roman periods (Bradley 2000).

Studies such as these have radically shifted the attention towards previously ignored themes and new questions in Greek archaeology. It seems to me that the picture we have built of IA central Italy thus far would benefit considerably if we were to follow this trend seriously and take up issues which it has prompted. Doing so, it must be underlined, is only possible at the present time thanks to a growing body of material evidence particularly coming from those Italic regions deemed to be at the periphery of urbanisation. Let us

then turn now to central Italy ([Figure 25.1](#)) and critically discuss the current state of the scholarship before moving on to examine and integrate well-known and new material evidence and the potential of this integration for transforming our perspective on towns.

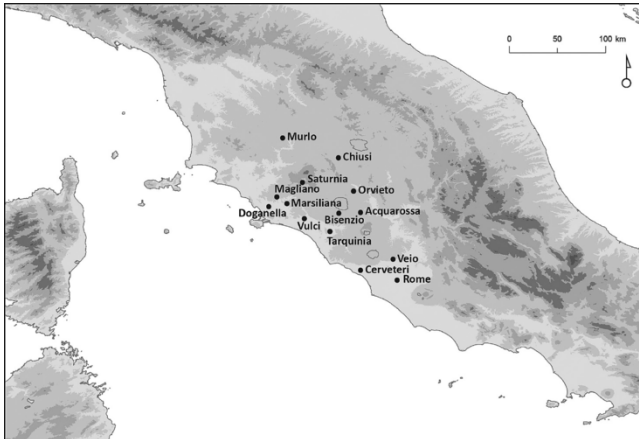


Figure 25.1. Map of Etruria with sites mentioned in the text.

The Urban Core in the Mid-Tyrrhenian Region

The current picture of the development of towns in central Italy is, in fact, a relatively recent one: over the last two decades, new studies and settlement evidence from the mid-Tyrrhenian coastal region have settled a lasting debate over the relationship between indigenous settlements and Greek settlements that were newly established from the eighth century BC in the Italic peninsula and Sicily (Riva [2010a](#): 2–7). Until then, the relationship was largely seen as a hierarchical one, whereby the earlier urban formation of these new Greek communities was a catalyst for the urbanisation of indigenous communities, most visibly so in Etruria. Rome was an exception in the independent processes leading to the *synoikism* of its earliest settlements and hence to its urbanisation. While it may seem to be a gross generalisation to some, it seems reasonable to me to state that Etruscologists and Classical archaeologists fully

endorsed this view. By contrast, pre- and protohistorians mostly rejected it on the basis of its underlying diffusionism that ultimately promoted Greek cultural superiority over indigenous communities. New evidence from both Etruria and *Latium*, and a growing dialogue between the two scholarly camps proved decisive for the prehistorians' arguments to gain wider acceptance and ultimately consensus (d'Agostino 2005). According to these arguments, indigenous urbanisation in the mid-Tyrrhenian region was not only largely contemporary with the urbanisation of non-indigenous communities, but those settlements that became urban in Tyrrhenian Etruria and *Latium Vetus* were already complex enough to be defined as proto-urban centres (Guidi 1998b; 2008). This complexity is primarily evaluated on the basis of two factors: first, the size of these proto-urban centres, which were much larger than previously and reflected densely populated settlement; second, the growth of burial grounds around these settlements, notably in Etruria, and the funerary material evidence that showed increasingly elaborate rituals (Riva 2010a: ch. 2). This view is largely accepted today, despite ongoing questions around the modalities, timing and details of these momentous processes, and differences between these processes in, for example, Etruria and *Latium* (Guidi 2008: 176–79). This radical shift in outlook has coincided with changes in Greek archaeology and calls to abandon Hellenocentric views of the establishment of Greek communities across the Mediterranean (Hodos 2006; 2010).

Proto-Urban, Urban and Central Places

The changing perspective has had far-reaching consequences. First, it has promoted the building of a model of indigenous urbanisation in central Italy. Second, in so doing, it has reinforced the picture of a mid-Tyrrhenian urban core as opposed to a periphery at its geographical margins. The model describes two phases, namely the urbanisation of a settlement following a proto-urban stage: encompassing the earliest proto-urban settlements, coastal south Etruria is seen, in this respect, to maintain pre-eminence over its neighbouring regions, including Rome and

other centres south of the Tiber such as *Gabii* and Ardea, which followed suit (Guidi 2008: 176). The periphery, by contrast, includes areas, where the settlement pattern did not follow this model and remained non-urban, or it did so after a delay. While protohistorians largely subscribe to this picture (Pacciarelli 2000), recent studies of areas characterised by ‘delayed urbanisation’ such as southern Latium, the Sabine region, Emilia Romagna and the northeastern Italic regions have underlined the variety and complexity of processes and trajectories underlying urbanisation across the Italic peninsula (Guidi and Santoro 2004; Guidi 2008). The emphasis on the Etruscan urban core that the model promotes is furthermore concomitant with the role attributed to Etruria in the proto-urbanisation of centres such as Capua and Pontecagnano in Campania, and Bologna and Verucchio in Emilia Romagna; such a role is deemed so vital as to conjecture the Etruscan colonisation of these centres (Guidi 2008: 180; cf. Cuozzo 2007), and even to retroject such a political influence from Etruria over the margins to earlier periods, namely the final Bronze Age (Bietti Sestieri 1997). As recently noted, this Etrusco-centric scenario, which may be partly due to the dominance of Etruscology with its strong historiographic tradition in Italian archaeology (Vanzetti 2004: 19–21), has ironically revived a diffusionist perspective by replacing Greece with Etruria as the catalyst for change.

The concept of proto-urbanisation itself, a key element of this model, requires close scrutiny. The term ‘proto-urban’ was first used and applied to Central Tyrrhenian Italy by Renato Peroni (1969) in the 1960s in order to explain the sociopolitical changes that he identified in the settlements and cemeteries of the region during the Bronze to Iron Age transition (see also Gnesotto 2006). Apart from its elusive definition (Vanzetti 2004: 26), the term generally refers to settlements that reached a certain size, which is regarded as indicative of a densely populated site, and that controlled a large territory within which a settlement hierarchy can be identified (Peroni and di Gennaro 1986; di Gennaro 2000). Such a definition, however, depends on arbitrary calculations of the threshold beyond which a settlement is

deemed to be large enough to be classified as proto-urban – which makes it effectively the central place so strongly criticised by Horden and Purcell. The problem becomes particularly acute when these thresholds also differentiate the Etruscan core from areas with ‘delayed urbanisation’ (Guidi 2008: 184). The identification of a settlement hierarchy within a specific territory suffers from similar problems, as the hierarchy itself is defined by decreasing thresholds from the centre. The sizes of proto-urban centres’ territories have moreover been determined by Thiessen Polygon analysis (di Gennaro 1982) and the Rank Size Rule (Guidi 1985; di Gennaro 2000), but these are mathematical analytical methods that are inherently at odds with the fluid settlement system of the Mediterranean as previously discussed. Even if scholars themselves have recognised a certain methodological naïveté in the early application of these methods, they have yet also duly noted their contribution to the shift in perspective away from Hellenocentric diffusionism that characterised research before the mid-1980s (Guidi 2000: 85). At the same time, the refinement of these methods and the introduction of others have recently helped to overcome some key problems related to Central Place theory, although the objections mentioned have by no means been resolved. Combining, for example, the XTENT model, which is based on Thiessen Polygons analysis, with a Digital Elevation Model (DEM) has allowed the reconstruction of hypothetical boundaries of distinct Etruscan territories while taking into consideration the limitations of the physical landscape more accurately (Redhouse and Stoddart 2011).

With these considerations in mind, it is worthwhile reflecting on the use of these methods and considering whether they are the best possible tools at our disposal for making inferences about distinct political territories. More fundamentally, we must also consider whether it is appropriate to presuppose political control at all in the early Iron Age as maintained by some (di Gennaro 1986). Recent work has tackled this issue by arguing for a dynamic formation of diverse political landscapes (Redhouse and Stoddart 2011). In fact, the greatest difficulty with this issue

is to identify the nature of this control. It is certainly reasonable to expect that large communities such as those associated with proto-urban centres would have needed to exploit natural resources and that their subsistence strategies would have shifted to a much larger scale than those of other, smaller communities. However, assuming the centralisation and political control of such exploitation on the basis of the archaeological evidence available is not axiomatic.

From the Early State to Political Authority in the Landscape

Ultimately, we must reflect on the conceptual genealogy of these assumptions: the model of a proto-urban centre controlling a specific territory derives from the Early State Module (ESM), which was initially proposed for Etruria (Renfrew 1975; Vanzetti 2004: 26), and from which applications for modelling inter-state sociopolitical interaction have been developed (Renfrew and Cherry 1986). The ESM itself originates from the Early State or Archaic State, which is an Anglo-American theoretical model that has dominated studies of the formation of early complex societies over the last few decades. Rooted in social and cultural evolutionism, the Early State was formulated as a form of sociopolitical organisation that developed from the chiefdom level through a gradual evolutionary process in which various factors – economic, ideological, social – interacted with one another (Carneiro 1970; Claessen and Skalník 1978a; 1978b; Claessen and van de Velde 1985; van de Velde 1985; more recently, Sanmartí 2004 and this volume). Several scholars have recently criticised this model for its failure to recognise the existence of multiple settlement hierarchies or, indeed, decentralisation within a single state (Chapman 2008: 154–55; for the latest critical approach to Mediterranean state formation, cf. Terrenato and Haggis 2011; see also Joffe 2002). While some have advocated, in its place, a ‘fuzzy model’ in which political control loses definite spatio-temporal boundaries (Stein 1998), others have been more extreme in their outright

rejection of the Early State altogether (Smith 2003: especially 94–102). Smith's rejection is not only motivated by the model's theoretical basis in social evolutionism (Smith 2003: 33–36), which has been criticised more widely (Shennan 1993), but he is equally critical of the conceptualisation of space as an 'absolute' or 'social constant' vis-à-vis the temporal transformations leading to social complexity. Smith calls this the 'absolutist ontology of space' (Smith 2003: 34), which he also firmly discards in favour of a relational notion of space and landscapes viewed '...as social artifacts that are produced and reproduced through varying dimensions of spatial practice' (Smith 2003: 25; cf. Knapp and Ashmore 1999). According to this relational approach, and in contrast with the locational model of space that it refutes, landscapes are political not because they reflect political control or centralisation, but rather because they are themselves 'constitutive elements of political life' and of political authority (Smith 2003: 76–77). Hence, Smith's dismissal of the Early State is not just based on the refutation of evolutionary typologies of political forms and checklists of criteria for state formation (Smith 2003: 81, 96; Chapman 2008: 157). By conceiving space as being generated in conjunction with political relationships established through social and spatial practices, the concept of the state as 'an absolute phenomenon of political *form*' becomes awkward (Smith 2003: 77, 80–85). Without ultimately denying the existence of states (Smith 2003: 108), Smith proposes the constitution of political relationships and of political authority through landscape as an alternative approach to the investigation of political landscapes. This approach takes into account three interconnected areas of analysis: spatial experience, namely material practices through space, spatial perception and the codes and signs underlying it, and finally spatial imagination and representation. All these three areas encapsulate different processes by which inequality and subordination are constructed, from the power over resources and labour to the political control in the production of meaning (Smith 2003: 72–74).

From a theoretical viewpoint, this different approach may at first appear to find some convergence with the Marxist outlook of the school of Italian pre- and proto-history (Guidi [1998a](#): 678) although the inherent materialism of the latter is incompatible with it. More importantly, this approach poses vast methodological problems for IA central Italy not least because of the lack of data that can lend themselves to such a detailed analysis, particularly as far as spatial perception and imagination are concerned. The origins and constitution of political authority in the early Iron Age and later have thus far been a fruitful area of research in Tyrrhenian Etruria (Iaia [1999](#); De Santis [2005](#); Riva [2010a](#)). This research, however, is mainly restricted to cemetery data, which do not allow studying how political authority operates within the larger public apparatus of governance in the landscape (Smith [2003](#): 108–109). Attempts to connect these data to the wider context have done so by looking at the extension and nature of the settlements and its cemeteries rather than the wider landscape (Pacciarelli [2000](#)). This is unfortunately inevitable, as we rely chiefly on survey evidence and, with few exceptions, lack detailed investigation (Guidi [2008](#): 177). Analogous, albeit less severe, problems concern the study of the political landscape of later periods, namely the early Archaic period. Again, save important exceptions that reveal political landscapes were structured through ritual and funerary practices, the increasing density of rural occupation in the sixth century BC is principally known from survey evidence (Rendeli [1993](#); Zifferero [2002](#); [2005](#); Carafa [2004](#)). The disparate state of the data in different Italian regions is an additional problem.

Yet, a critical look at the conceptual foundation of the Early State encourages us to re-evaluate the available evidence and to tackle two final key issues. The first one is the relationship between urbanisation and state formation; the second one concerns the relationship between the evolutionary outlook of this model and the settlement categories that are derived from Roman textual sources but applied to IA Italy.

Some studies deem proto-urbanisation as a constituent of incipient state formation, and urbanisation itself as an important component of statehood (Guidi 1998b; 2000; 2008: 187; di Gennaro 2000); others underline the distinction between urbanisation and state formation (Bradley 2000: 32; Riva 2010a: 21–22). Conversely, conceiving of landscapes as constitutive of political authority through social and spatial practices help us to clarify the reflexive relationship between spatial forms (nucleated/dispersed, urban/non-urban settlement) and temporal (political) transformations through practice (Smith 2003: 25, 71–72). In this way, we can trace the structuration of political power in the landscape through time. Highlighting the heterogeneity of the reoccupation of the landscape around proto-urban centres in the course of the eighth century in south Etruria (Iaia and Mandolesi 1995; 2010) allows us, for example, to reconstruct a scenario of ‘constitutive political landscapes’, in which different social groups strategically occupied sites for resource exploitation and communication and for contact within very fluid spatial and social relationships. Indeed, this heterogeneous scenario places emphasis on the formation of a connective tissue around the proto-urban and later urban centres that functioned more as a settlement network than as a settlement hierarchy system, driven more by exchange flows through material practices than by political dependence upon a central place within state boundaries. Alternatively, a study on Umbria, traditionally considered as the non-urban periphery of Etruria (see below), has argued for the need to understand non-urban or ‘territorial’ states over a long time period (900–300 BC) through the analysis of archaeological, epigraphic and textual sources, emphasising the dynamic and diverse nature of Italic states and state formation as an ongoing process (Bradley 2000: 29–41). The Umbrian states are seen effectively as akin to the *ethnos* states of the Greek world (Bradley 2000: 58).

The second issue in this critical overview is that evolutionary thinking, which underlies the Early State and the proto-urban concept, is ethnocentric, because the urban state is seen as a more developed form of state than the

‘tribal state’ in the non-urban margins (Rowlands 1989; Shennan 1993; cf. d’Ercole 2000). Such modern ethnocentrism is, in fact, amplified by the use of ancient settlement categories for the Iron Age such as *pagi* and *vici*, which are themselves deeply value-laden terms in origin (Dench 1995: 128, 130–40; cf. Bradley 2000: 56–59; Zifferero 2002: 250; see now Stek 2009). As the nature and relationship of these categories is unclear even for later historical periods, their relevance for the Iron Age is questionable at best (Dench 1995: 135). While I would not deny key regional differences across central Italy, it seems to me that we are now in a position to go beyond such evolutionary views and problematic terms. We can now move towards a new analytical framework that stresses exchange flows and dynamics instead of static landscapes, state and ethnic boundaries, and that makes the centre and margins look less different than they are usually made to appear. Within this framework, the focus is upon mobility through exchange flows and social and spatial practices that over a relatively long time period gave rise to political relationships, which themselves were never stable and led to alternative or, indeed, opposing forms of political authority, domination and subordination.

Exchange Networks Beyond Urban Centres

Within this analytical framework, I would like to consider the thriving and abatement of settlements as integrated aspects of the same network both within the so-called urban core and its margins, which I will discuss by examining selected sites (Figure 25.1). Some settlements in Etruria exemplify such dynamism, such as Marsiliana d’Albegna, Murlo (Poggio Civitate), Acquarossa and Bisenzio, which flourished in the seventh century but did not survive beyond the sixth century; outside Etruria, I will consider sites in Umbria and the Apennines in order to illustrate a similar dynamism of local exchange networks.

Our knowledge of Marsiliana has been largely limited to its cemeteries, although newly excavated residential contexts are changing the picture considerably (Camilli *et al.* 2005; 2008; Casi 2007); the settlement at Bisenzio is known from surface survey only and from its excavated burial grounds (Delpino 1977). Conversely, the excavated settlements of Murlo and Acquarossa illustrate the wealth and the forms of power that this engendered in smaller, albeit different, settlements: Acquarossa was a relatively populous centre of around 25 ha at the height of its growth (Roos and Wikander 1986), while Murlo has been characterised as a ceremonial, political or civic centre (Torelli 2000; Rathje 2007). It was an architectural complex that comprised an Orientalising elite residential building, a large workshop and a tripartite structure with possibly a religious function. All of these were destroyed by fire and were replaced by a later Archaic and much more elaborate structure with a closed square plan (Nielsen and Tuck 2001). At both sites, the construction of monumental architectural complexes not only reveals the remarkable access to wealth and resources of these centres, but also the political authority of those who controlled them. Of these complexes, the Archaic building at Murlo and the later buildings A and C of Area F at Acquarossa were decorated with figured terracottas whose iconographic programmes displayed the public and political character of the buildings (Strandberg Olofsson 1986; Sassatelli 2000; Rathje 2007). Other buildings with similar public or semi-public functions must have existed at large urban centres in Etruria, as attested, for example, by the remains of elite buildings at *Veii*/Piazza d'Armi (Bartoloni 2003: 58) and further afield, in Rome (the *Regia*), Satricum (Wikander and Wikander 1990: 202–205), and possibly at smaller settlements similar to Murlo elsewhere such as Otricoli in the middle Tiber valley (Colonna 2001: 16).

Although different hypotheses have been put forward to explain the demise of these settlements, they all have something in common: they stress the crystallisation of Etruscan city-states' control over their territory following deep social transformations in the sixth century, and the pressure that this exerted upon these politically autonomous

communities, which were ultimately incorporated into the political orbit of the city-states. Thus, the demise of Bisenzio was a result of Orvieto (*Volsinii*)'s territorial expansion that was followed by the foundation of a frontier sanctuary on Bolsena Lake (Berlingò 2005: 563–64). Similarly, Murlo and Acquarossa were incorporated within the territories of Chiusi, and Tarquinia or Orvieto respectively (Sassatelli 2000: 153; Torelli 2000: 68). The isolated character of these sites and the 'princely' nature of their political authority are often underlined and contrasted with the power of the large urban centres that absorbed them (Sassatelli 2000: 147; Torelli 2000: 72). This is by no means an unlikely scenario, but the contrast between urban and non-urban forms of political power appears less sharp once we examine the wider context and consider instability not simply as a trait of princely authority but as intrinsic to the exchange networks within which all these settlements developed and/or declined.

Marsiliana and the Albegna valley are in this respect particularly instructive: the destruction of the elite community of Marsiliana by Vulci once the area came under the city's control (Acconcia 2005; Cardoso 2005) is a catastrophist scenario that is hardly justified by the archaeological evidence. Indeed, recent studies of the well-explored archaeological landscape of the Albegna valley have highlighted the development of urban and rural settlements in the valley side by side since the seventh century, suggesting that changes in landscape occupation between the seventh and sixth centuries BC were due to mobility and demographic increase in the area and related to shifting exchange and trade networks (Perkins 1999; 2010). This is not only seen in the changing distribution and nature of burial clusters around Marsiliana, Magliano and Saturnia that probably related to small rural settlements in the valley (Perkins 1999: 80–100), but it is also indicated by the establishment of a new large redistribution or market centre at Doganella towards the end of the seventh century, and by the distribution of transport amphorae produced there (Perkins and Walker 1990; Perkins 1999: 180–81). The centralisation of amphora production and the distribution of

amphorae and other ceramic forms related to the transport and storage of agricultural produce such as *dolia* illustrate the exchange links between Doganella and other settlements in the lower valley that underlay the growth of political relationships between them (Perkins 1999: 181–88). The evidence from Podere Tartuchino, a farm established at the end of the sixth century, confirms the existence of a network, in which surplus production at single farms connected these to each other and to Doganella (Attolini and Perkins 1992). The involvement of Marsiliana in the network is confirmed by new evidence such as a late Archaic rural residence with a quadrangular plan and open courtyard, which is comparable to the *Casa dell'Impluvium* at Roselle and the earliest suburban villa at the Auditorium in Rome (Camilli *et al.* 2008). Archaic coastal *emporia* at Fonteblanda and Talamonaccio that served the valley further testify to a network that extended beyond the local economy (Ciampoltrini and Firmati 2002; Perkins 2005: 115). Although acknowledged by some (Acconcia 2005; Cardoso 2005), the power and direct involvement of Vulci over these developments, including the foundation of Doganella, lacks any concrete evidence other than the close proximity between Vulci and Doganella and the problematic correlation between material culture and political influence (Perkins 2010).

The case of Marsiliana demonstrates that we may need to readjust catastrophist hypotheses and notions of ruptures as invoked for the demise of Murlo and Acquarossa (Sassatelli 2000: 153), while recognising continuous change as a feature to which all networks were subjected (Purcell 2005: 267). With more excavations of non-urban sites, we are in a better position to understand the complex and changing nature of these networks beyond the alleged impact of political influence from the city-states, and the relationship between stable and controlling large urban centres and unstable, controlled non-urban settlements (Perkins 1999: 191).

A boundary area where oscillations in the extension of political control of specific Etruscan city-states conceal the

complexity and changing nature of political relationships across the landscape is Monti della Tolfa (Figure 25.2). Rich in mineral resources and a topographical watershed between Tarquinia's and Cerveteri (*Caere*)'s territories, the area has been systematically explored through survey and excavation of a few settlements (Zifferero 1995; 2000). After the abandonment of Final Bronze Age sites, the reoccupation of this area in the eighth century with the emergence of sites in strategic and defensive positions points to the control and exploitation of its mineral and woodland resources by competing social groups (Iaia and Mandolesi 2010). This goes hand in hand with the growth of Castellina del Marangone down the coast: a medium-sized settlement on a plateau overlooking the mouth of the Marangone River and equidistant from Tarquinia and Cerveteri, Castellina developed from the eighth century as a metal processing site thanks to its prosperous maritime contacts (Gran-Aymerich 2005; Prayon 2005). Despite suggestions that Castellina came under Cerveteri's political control (Prayon 2005), its continued occupation to the third century BC, the distribution of smaller settlements from the coast to the hinterland towards Mount Tolfaccia overlooking the same valleys and river basins, as well as the emergence of three Archaic sanctuaries in the area of Castellina and further south at Punta della Vipera, all indicate an autonomous network or, as has been suggested, a 'buffer zone' between the territories of Tarquinia and Cerveteri (Rendeli 1993: 240–45). The dynamic process of elite groups' occupation and exploitation of the Monti della Tolfa becomes noticeable in the seventh century with the emergence of isolated *tumulus* burials and smaller settlements such as Monterano and Pian della Conservain the Mignone valley, that may be interpreted as another exchange network among autonomous communities (Rendeli 1993: 299–303). To this network belongs San Giovenale, a flourishing settlement located on a plateau by a small tributary of the Mignone River (Roos and Wikander 1986). Only towards the end of the seventh and in the sixth centuries do the increasing number of new medium-sized settlements, open sites and the expansion of existing ones point to a capillary occupation of

the Mignone valley and exploitation of its natural resources. The open sites linked to burial grounds, in particular, indicate the stable occupation of land given to agricultural use and management (Zifferero 2000: 239–47). These changes have been attributed to the political control of Cerveteri (Rendeli 1993: 329–30), and the close similarity of funerary architecture and other types of material culture in the area to those from Cerveteri have been considered as further evidence of this control (Rendeli 1993: 343). Correlating specific styles of material culture with political control, however, is highly problematic because of the underlying assumption that style is a passive reflection of political or even ethnic identities. Style is, on the contrary, a product of social and cultural practice (Shanks and Tilley 1987: 146–71; Conkey 1990: 12–14) and can be actively manipulated in order to negotiate or maintain boundaries. Evidence of cult sites in the area from the sixth century, scarce as it is so far, offers more reliable support for the hypothesis of consolidated political control of the city-state through a structured ritual landscape (Rendeli 1993: 363; Zifferero 1995: 340–48; 2002). Ultimately, however, we are unable to distinguish whether the city-state maintained spatial boundaries or whether these were the result of political relationships established within the settlement network of the area. Such a distinction may even be insignificant, as the stylistic and material affinities with Cerveteri may be evidence of political relationships that autonomous communities established with the city-state by drawing social boundaries through stylistic distinction (*sensu* Bourdieu). In time, such relationships may in turn have ensured the control of Cerveteri's interests in the area.

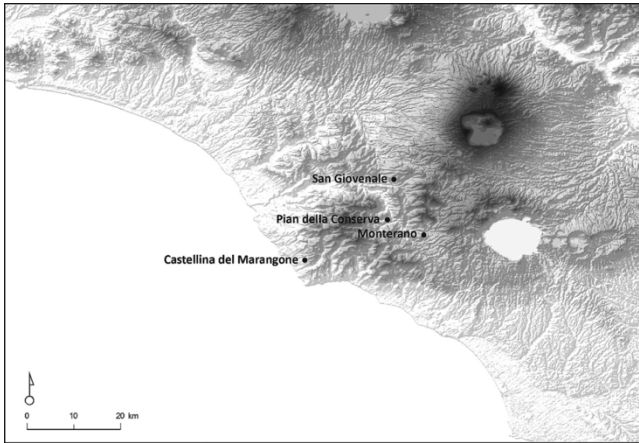


Figure 25.2. Map of central Italy with inland sites mentioned in the text.

Exchange Networks Beyond Etruria

The picture outlined by this kind of evidence is not only one of fluctuating political control across the landscape and the political relationships that were established alongside it, but also one in which exchange flows and networks were responsible for this fluctuation. Nowhere is the role of these networks more visible than at some key settlements and areas outside the urban core of Tyrrhenian Etruria across inland central Italy ([Figure 25.3](#)). At the same time, one should not underestimate the concurrent changing networks further afield, westwards and across the Tyrrhenian Sea, visible in the establishment of coastal trading settlements from Etruria to southern France (Riva [2010b](#)). Once deemed peripheral because largely unknown by field research, inland and Apennine central Italy has recently come to scholarly attention, and revealed a picture of highly articulated exchange networks linking the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic shores of the peninsula.

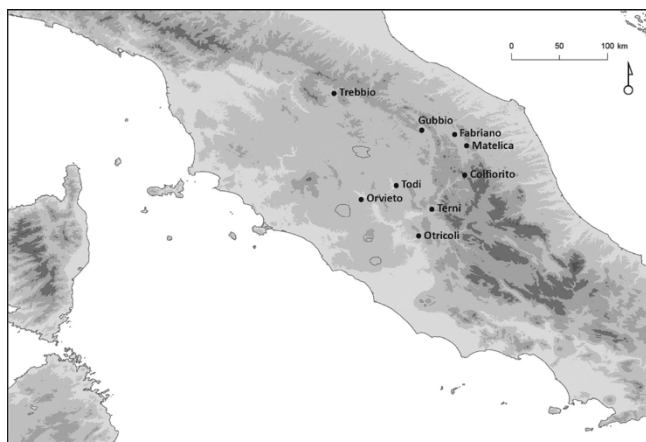


Figure 25.3. Map of the Tolfa Hills, southern Etruria with sites mentioned in the text.

The Tiber valley, in particular, has been at the centre of recent research interest (Patterson 2004; Patterson and Coarelli 2008). Studies of the middle Tiber valley as a frontier area, for example, have noted the growth of secondary sites at the northern margins of the territory of Etruscan Veii from the end of the eighth century along routes of communication and exchange across inland central Italy, and the social and regional mobility along these routes (Cifani 2005: 154, 158). This evidence not only points to the permeability of state boundaries and the autonomy of such frontier areas, but also to the nature of these areas as a locus for exchange (Cifani 2001: 114). Indeed, the archaeological evidence from the eighth to the sixth centuries on both sides of the middle Tiber valley attests to this, from Otricoli and Amelia (cf. Sisani 2008: 63–64) to Todi (Stopponi 2008). Acquarossa itself, placed in the Vezza River valley that linked the Tiber with the territory of Tarquinia, shows cultural relations with *Falerii*, Cerveteri, Vulci and Tarquinia (Colonna 1973). Its sixth-century demise must be seen in conjunction with the demise of nearby Monte Piombone, the growth of Bomarzo at the Vezza confluence with the Tiber, and of Orvieto further north, but also with concomitant changes on the eastern side of the Tiber. Here, in the course of the sixth century, the site of Todi, located at the

southwest-looking curve of the Tiber before the latter narrows down into the Forello gorge, grew to become a 25 ha site (Cifani 2001: 118). Its cemeteries of Logge and San Raffaele contained elite burials of sixth- to fifth-century date with prestige objects and imports from Orvieto (Bruschetti 2001: 142–44, 147; Stopponi 2008: 22).

From the late sixth century, the Tiber became a distinctive point of convergence rather than a boundary area as settlements east of the valley between Orvieto and Perugia – some argue, even further north to modern Città di Castello (Sisani 2008) – came under Etruscan control (Stopponi 2008). Given that this hypothesis is based on often later epigraphic evidence, ancient sources, Etruscan imports and ‘Etruscanised’ material culture, it is challenging, however, to detect the dynamics of such processes in the Archaic period beyond recognising a heightened human mobility. Other scholars have discussed these changes more cautiously in terms of Etruscan trade links (Bradley 2000: 97–98). Indeed, reading the archaeological and epigraphic evidence in this way and emphasising the diversity of local community identities (Bradley 2000: 92–100) allow us to recognise the role of the changing networks that linked different communities on both sides of the valley in the decline of certain settlements and conversely the flourishing and urbanisation of others. Hence, the marginal location of sixth-century Acquarossa was not in respect to Orvieto, but to a new network, of which a central node was Orvieto, towards the east bank of the Tiber and Todi; through Todi, Volsinian and other Etruscan goods and imports reached Umbrian sites, including Colfiorito (Bonomi Ponzi 1997: 87–88, 136; Bruschetti 2001: 147). Acquarossa’s demise, in other words, was not the direct result of Orvieto’s political control, but of a changing network at the centre of which was this burgeoning Etruscan town. This network involved Todi, one of the earliest settlements in Umbria to become urban in the fifth century, along with Gubbio, another key site located on trans-Appennine routes to the Adriatic (Stopponi 2008: 22). At Todi, the monumentalisation of its urban sanctuaries with architectural terracottas modelled on those from the slightly earlier Belvedere temple at Orvieto (Bruschetti 2001: 151–

52; Stopponi 2008: 22) indicates strong political relationships between the two centres, resulting from the elites' social and material practices mostly discernible in the earlier and contemporary funerary evidence. Further support in favour of this picture are the concurrent changes at Terni and its basin in the Nera valley, which was a crucial node of exchange between Tyrrhenian and Adriatic central Italy from the Final Bronze Age (Ponzi Bonomi 2001). Scholars interpret Terni as an important early IA proto-urban centre, not unlike those of south Etruria (Cifani 2001: 112–13). Such momentous developments, which are also visible in Terni's cemeteries (Acciaierie, S. Pietro in Campo) (Leonelli 2003; Broncoli 2006) and the circulation of its material culture in Etruria (Colonna 2001: 18), must be seen in conjunction with the growth of Otricoli as a river port further south on the east bank of the river from the end of the eighth century (Colonna 1999: 28–29). Terni's central role in this scenario, however, changed after the middle of the sixth century when Orvieto became the central node of the exchange network (Ponzi Bonomi 2001: 330).

A significant feature underlying these developments and interaction as a whole in Umbria is the topography of the region, which is characterised by high mountains and isolated plains and valleys and a relative lack of large fertile plains (Bradley 2000: 48–53). This has not only influenced the location of sizeable settlements along river valley terraces and valley bottoms, but also the specific selection of mountainous areas for occupation (Cifani 2001: 123). The material culture of some upland settlements nevertheless reveals extraordinarily wide-ranging connections that challenge these occupation patterns, and confirms the suggestions that social rather than physical factors affect the movement of people and material in mountainous regions (Horden and Purcell 2000: 132). This is particularly the case of those settlements located along the communication routes between the Valle Umbra and the Apenninic range to the east and the Adriatic side, such as Colfiorito, and that link these areas through the Chienti and Potenza River valleys (Bonomi Ponzi 1997). While, as is expected, the location at key intersections determined the flourishing of such sites,

only now are we able to gauge the extension and fluctuation of specific exchange networks that affected settlement growth and decline, thanks to new research in these areas. One particular district that has been subject to intensive fieldwork in the last 10 years or so is the upper Esino valley, which is situated in a 45 km-long and fairly wide valley between two branches of the Apennines: this is the so-called 'Camertine trough' extending from Camerino in the southeast to Arcevia in the northwest. Here, the site of Matelica, set at a particularly strategic point of communication between two mountain passes, Fossato di Vico leading to Gubbio to the north and Colfiorito to the south, has been thoroughly investigated since the mid-1990s: a series of large cemeteries and related settlements dated from roughly the eighth to the sixth centuries have been excavated along the Esino River terraces (Silvestrini and Sabbatini 2008). Although some burials were in use since the ninth century, the extraordinary display of wealth and prestige objects in seventh-century elite burials and the upsurge of habitation areas demonstrate the level of prosperity that these communities reached in this period (Biocco and Silvestrini 2008; Sabbatini 2008a). The occupation of the surrounding valley with evidence of early deforestation furthermore testifies to the agricultural exploitation of the valley that was essential for the survival of these sizeable communities (Biocco and Silvestrini 2008: 27, 37). A comparable scenario consisting of a much more sparse IA occupation away from the river terraces may be gauged from preliminary results of the survey of an area just north of Matelica, in the environs of Fabriano (Pearce *et al.* 2009) where older excavations in the modern city had also located wealthy Orientalising elite burials (Sabbatini 2008b).

The grave goods and imports of these and of the contemporary elite burials at Matelica reveal extraordinarily far-reaching connections across inland and Tyrrhenian central Italy on the one hand, and with the Adriatic and Apulian regions on the other (Silvestrini and Sabbatini 2008), and therefore a prosperous exchange network, in which the upper Esino valley played a significant role.

Another noteworthy indicator of its role in the network comes from the settlement of Trebbio located on the east bank of the upper Tiber valley between Sansepolcro and Città di Castello (Iaia and Moroni Lanfredini 2009). Trebbio developed between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC and reached 20 ha in size at its peak between the late seventh and the early sixth centuries (Iaia 2009, 54). Its growth stemmed from its location on vital trade routes, as attested by its diverse material culture, as well as the intense large-scale ceramic production taking place there (Gennusa *et al.* 2007; Iaia and Moroni Lanfredini 2009). Although the excavation of the site is still ongoing, the preliminary results show an interesting pattern: the contexts from the seventh century are closely related to the material from inland Marche and, above all, Matelica although links with Colfiorito further south are not absent. Later, between the end of the seventh and the first half of the sixth century, the contexts at Trebbio show relations with the Umbro-Romagnolo cultural region, conceivably the result of the economic demise of Verucchio to the northwest on the Adriatic (Iaia 2009: 51–54). Unexpectedly, the material record at Trebbio shows no links with Etruria or Cortona that is considered to have extended its control to this area (Iaia 2009: 51). The fading of Trebbio's links with Matelica are consistent with the general collapse of the latter in the course of the sixth century, which is indicated by the rapid contraction of its cemeteries (Sabbatini 2008a: 57). Importantly, this decline corresponded in turn to the growing wealth in the cemeteries of Colfiorito south of Matelica, which entered the exchange network of Todi and Orvieto as described above, but was also in contact with the newly burgeoning emporic centres on the Adriatic coast such as Numana (Bonomi Ponzi 1997: 88).

Evidence on the funerary ritual and spatial arrangement of the cemeteries of these intra-Appennine settlements give us an important indication of the social and material practices of specific social groups in these communities that gave rise to political relationships with nearby and more distant communities. But what may primarily show the establishment of such political relationships across different

communities in the landscape are the sanctuaries that were established mostly on high grounds across inland central Italy from the sixth century BC (Bradley 2000: 62–77 for an overview) and the series of hillforts in upland areas (Bradley 2000: 53–62). Though difficult to date in some cases, the hillforts not only functioned as a system of control and defence of the landscape; several were, in fact, associated with burial grounds and were permanent settlements (Bradley 2000: 55). The sanctuaries generally lacked built structures but were often located on visible and strategic sites in the landscape and were related to the hillforts, as was the case, for instance, at Monte Torre Maggiore (Bonomi Ponzi 2006). They have produced votive deposits with a variety of bronze statuettes and some epigraphic evidence that demonstrate their use by local communities (Bradley 2000: 67). Given the modern plundering of many of these sites, however, we must also concede that specific evidence of the use of these spaces by outsiders or individuals showing off outside relationships may be missing. The famous Mars from Monte Santo near Todi, which was produced in Orvieto and inscribed with a dedication in Umbrian, may in fact exemplify such missing evidence, even if Todi is interpreted as a cosmopolitan frontier settlement (cf. Bradley 2000: 71)

Conclusions

Through selected case studies from Etruria to the Apennines, I have examined the complexity of exchange networks beyond the large Etruscan urban centres and their links to other networks across inland central Italy from the early Iron Age to the fifth century BC. I have suggested that the instability of such networks is mostly visible in the success – urban or otherwise – and demise of some settlements and that it should be seen as a phenomenon that was integral to the fluctuations of political relationships and ensuing control across the landscape. It is, however, extremely difficult to identify the social and spatial practices that gave rise to such political relationships in the material record of the

landscape, although our evidence for Tyrrhenian Etruria is particularly abundant and better suited to answer these questions. Ultimately, only a detailed study of the archaeological, iconographic and epigraphic records of the landscape of a particular area may enable us to understand these practices and the processes that led to specific forms of political authority and power relations over a relatively long time period. For inland and Apennine central Italy, the record is very limited, partly because of its marginalisation in scholarly research, and partly because of the genuine difficulties of data retrieval in upland landscapes (Pearce *et al.* 2009). This picture is, however, changing fast, thanks to increasing interest and new fieldwork in these regions, and a first result is that we are now able to study the connective mobility that linked urban and non-urban settlements across central Italy.

The Iron Age was a momentous period in the history and archaeology of central Italy: urbanisation and urbanism are undoubtedly key aspects of such a period. Amidst the changes and instability that I have described above, most of the large urban centres in the mid-Tyrrhenian region did not decline but indeed thrived. There were, as always, winners and losers. Yet, only an approach that takes networks and the complexity of exchange among urban and non-urban settlements seriously enables us to see towns as an ‘*explanandum*, not an *explanans*’ (Abrams 1978: 30) of the much wider context in which they prospered and declined.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Bernard Knapp and Peter van Dommelen for inviting me to participate in this project. I have benefitted very much from personal discussions with Cristiano Iaia and Elena Isayev, and from seminar discussions that took place at Cambridge and Newcastle. Finally, both Cristiano Iaia, Alessandro Mandolesi and Simon Stoddart have kindly let me read their unpublished forthcoming articles: I thank them all.

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26 Long-Term Social Change in Iron Age Northern Iberia (ca. 700–200 BC)

Joan Sanmartí

Abstract

With this contribution, I reopen the debate on the causes and dynamics of long-term social change. The archaeological evidence in the study area of Catalonia is consistent with the complex model of social evolution put forward by Johnson and Earle in the last decades of the twentieth century. This is true with respect to both the evolutionary typology – a sequence from domestic to local groups, and then to regional polities through Big Man communities – and the evolutionary process that they proposed, in which demographic increase is argued to play a key role. I also take into account Godelier's structural Marxist evolutionary hypothesis, which I think is compatible with Johnson and Earle's model but hard to substantiate with the available data. The role of culture contact and trade with 'colonial' societies (Phoenician, Etruscan and Greek) is also examined, and I conclude that foreign trade was instrumental for indigenous elites to acquire and consolidate their privileged status; it probably did not play a significant role as a cause for social change. By the fourth and third centuries BC, I argue that important regional polities had developed that were highly centralised in the coastal area, while the interior is a case of heterarchical social organisation.

Introduction

The analysis of the development of social complexity among the peoples of the Mediterranean coast of the Iberian peninsula has broadly followed the general trends of European and North American archaeology, even if often a few steps behind. Bosch-Gimpera, for instance, believed that the late Iron Age Iberian culture was the product of a superposition of different cultural strata, the last of which was a strong Hellenic influence that emanated from the southeast of the peninsula, where he believed Iberian Culture was formed (Bosch-Gimpera 1923; 1932). The cultural label was borrowed from Greek Classical sources and extended to most of the Mediterranean coast of the Iberian peninsula and beyond the Pyrenees, as far as Western Languedoc. This position clearly reflects the strong influence of his mentor Kossina and the so-called *Kulturkreislehre* (Bosch-Gimpera 1923; 1932). Several decades later, Maluquer de Motes (1966; 1982) developed an interpretation that followed the trend of one-sided colonialist-inspired acculturation interpretations of cultural contact and that focused on the supposed acceptance by the indigenous populations of forms of behaviour and organisation introduced by the Greek colonisers. From the 1960s onwards, the evidence uncovered for the scale and early date of the Phoenician colonisation on the Andalusian coasts (Aubert 2001) led to new interpretations of the identity of who had initiated the changes in the indigenous communities. This did not, however, result in a fundamental questioning of the model put forward by Maluquer de Motes, which had become generally accepted. Radical change occurred in the mid-1980s with the work of Ruiz (1998; 2000), which was to some extent based on Mangas' (1977) social analysis of the Iberian world, but which was rooted above all in structural Marxism as proposed by Godelier and Friedman (Godelier 1991; 1999; Friedman 1975). Ruiz's work centred on the analysis of the process of transformation in kinship relations which led to the formation of stratified societies organised through client networks. For my part, following Johnson and Earle's (2000) model, I have tried to introduce the analysis of material bases (demographic, technological and environmental) into

the discussion of sociocultural change (Sanmartí 2004). Although this discourse has been seen as ‘functionalist’, perhaps understandably so (Grau 2007: 119–20), I personally do not think that this label is adequate. I do consider social conflict as a relevant cause of change, and if I retain a holistic view of the social sciences, I do not question the importance of individual agency – but I agree that the latter is limited by the social structure. Furthermore, during the past few years, excellent work from the perspective of post-colonial theory has been carried out, which has helped to overcome some of the ideas most strongly connected to modern colonial experience and to renew the field of theoretical thought on the interaction between local and colonial populations (Vives-Ferrándiz 2008). However, much of this work, as I see it, still tends to reduce culture change to the single phenomenon of organic and unintended hybridisation – as observable in material culture with a mix of elements derived from different cultures, while ignoring the social, demographic and economic processes that lie at the heart of sociocultural evolution. It might thus be said to return to the culture-historical agenda of the *Kulturkreislehre*, even if in a more refined way.

It is my aim in this chapter to set out a new synthesis of the processes of change between the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1200–700 BC) and the Roman conquest (ca. 200 BC) in the northern regions of the Iberian culture area. This will take into account research carried out over the last decades, especially concerning the role of kinship, and it will somehow complete and refine interpretations that I have developed elsewhere on the importance of demography, technological change and colonial relations. I shall therefore proceed chronologically in an attempt to analyse and explain the changing social situations encountered in the region under study.

Between Family-Level and Local Groups: Five Millennia of Little-Known History

The development of local corporative groups – small

communities of 100–500 individuals united by kinship ties who own, exploit and defend a common territory – is quite well attested from the early Neolithic onwards (Bosch and Santacana 2009). This is what can be inferred from the existence in this period of settlements housing a consistent number of families, as at Barranc d'en Fabra in Amposta (Figures 26.1 and 26.2) with a minimum of nine houses (Bosch *et al.* 1996). The same can be gleaned from the different types of collective burials (caves, dolmens and structures known as *paradolmens* that combine the other two types) that in some cases contained hundreds of individuals and which are found as late as the end of the second millennium BC, when they began to be replaced by *Urnfild* cemeteries of individual cremations.

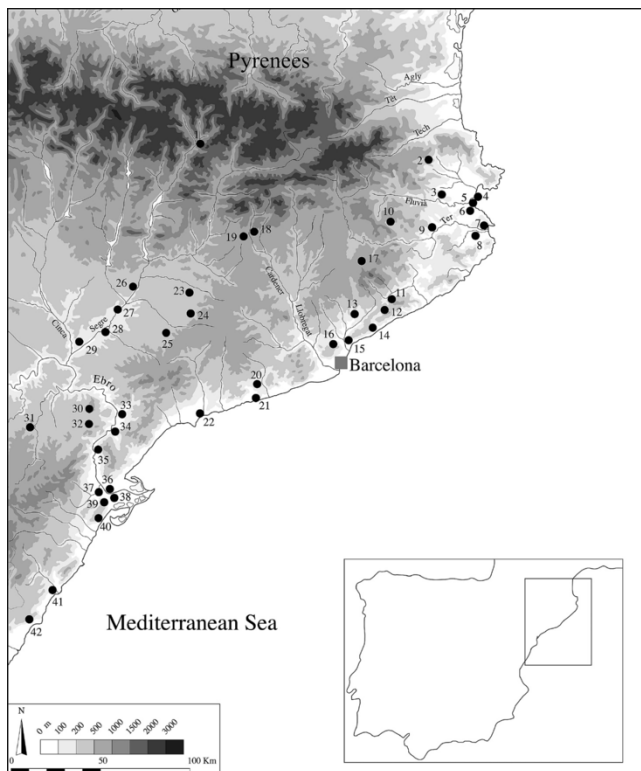


Figure 26.1. Map of northern Iberia. 1. Llavorsí, 2. Agullana, 3. Mas Castellar de Pontós, 4. Sant Martí d'Empúries, 5. Emporion-Empúries-Ampurias, 6. Vilanera, 7. La Fonollera, 8. Ullastret, 9. Sant Julià de Ramis, 10. Cova

de l'Avellaner, 11. Llinars, 12. Costa de can Martorell, 13. Can Piteu-Can Roqueta, 14. Burriac, 15. Puig Castellar de Santa Coloma de Gramenet, 16. Turó de ca n'Oliver, 17. Turó del Montgros, 18. Anseresa, 19. El Castellvell, 20. Can Canyís, 21. Alorda Park, 22. Tarragona, 23. El Molí d'Espígol, 24. Els Estincells, 25. Els Vilars d'Arbeca, 26. La Colomina, 27. La Pedrera, 28. La Femosa, 29. Roques de Sant Formatge, 30. Turó del Calvari, 31. Tossal Montañés, 32. Coll del Moro de Gandesa, 33. Castellet de Banyoles, 34. Barranc de Gàfols, 35. Aldovesta, 36. La Palma, 37. Mianes, 38. L'Oriola, 39. Barranc d'en Fabra, 40. Sant Jaume-Mas d'en Serrà, 41. La Solivella, 42. El Torelló d'Almassora



Figure 26.2. Recreation of the Neolithic site of Barranc d'en Fabra.

These collective funerary practices give an indication of the importance that these societies attributed to ancestry and to each individual's place within the kinship networks, from which we may think that all their rights and obligations were derived in every aspect of life, including political, economic and reproductive spheres. This contrasts notably with the freedom of action that characterises those groups which have their social organisation at the level of the family unit, as is the case with pre-Neolithic societies. I believe that the development of kinship networks that were firmly rooted in the territory and the creation of political spaces strictly controlled by local communities ultimately

represent the consequences of population growth and of the necessity to intensify production and to expand the political economy in order to cope with shortages. There are some archaeological data to support this interpretation. Analysis of the human remains of the Cova de l'Avellaner has, for instance, revealed a diet that is poor in proteins and based on vegetable products, which may be expected in a situation where population growth might have led to food shortages (Bosch and Tarrús 1990). There is also clear evidence for violence at sites like the *paradolmen* of Costa de can Martorell, where the remains of 200 individuals have been found, many of whom died a violent death (Palomo and Gibaja 2003).

On the other hand, we should also mention the existence of individual burials during the same period, sometimes isolated and other times in small groups (Francès 2005: 61). The latter, however, were not real cemeteries in use over long periods of time, which suggests that, in some areas and at certain times, kinship ties were less significant. If we add to this the evidence of settlements with very small numbers of houses or even isolated houses, we may propose that at different moments during the four long millennia which preceded the Late Bronze Age, a social structure focusing on the family unit may have intermittently returned to the fore. This may have been the consequence of a decrease in population, which in turn was probably the result of a significant reduction in the means of subsistence, itself a long-term outcome of intensive production beyond the territory's carrying capacity. We do not yet have evidence detailed enough to prove these assumptions, but the hypotheses that we propose enable us to explain global stagnation of population and forms of social organisation during this long period.

The formation of sedentary communities is particularly noticeable from the end of the second millennium onwards, with the development of small settlements generally made up of adjoining single-room houses, whose back wall created a rudimentary defensive wall and which housed 10–50 families. Although the existence of hamlets and villages is

not a radical novelty, those settlements, which developed in the Late Bronze Age or later, are almost always characterised by a focus on defence, as is suggested by their location on elevated sites and by their structure with a continuous enclosing wall and a single access point.

This type of settlement developed progressively in different areas. It appears first at the end of the second millennium BC on the plains of the Ebro valley. A particularly noticeable example is Els Vilars d'Arbeca, whose foundation dates approximately to 800 BC (Alonso *et al.* 1998). It is a heavily fortified site, relatively small (less than 4000 sq m) but enclosed by a wall which in time became 5 m wide. It was reinforced by 10 towers, a ditch and a number of cavalry obstacles. This fortification protected perhaps 40 or so small houses whose population could hardly have surpassed 200 individuals (Figure 26.3).

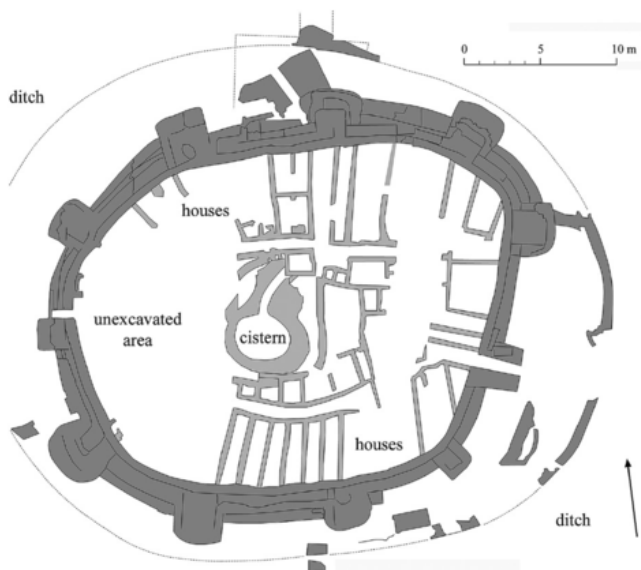


Figure 26.3. Els Vilars d'Arbeca plan and view.

The same kind of settlement developed later in the seventh century BC in the north of Valencia and in southern Catalonia, where some have been excavated. There are no known settlements on the north and central coasts of Catalonia which can definitely be included in this group, although we do have some evidence that suggests the existence of nucleated population centres of a certain size from the tenth century BC onwards (La Fonollera, in Torroella de Montgrí: Pons [1977](#)) and which often display,

in the eighth century BC and later, a similar concern for defence. An example of this is the settlement on the small island of Sant Martí de Empúries, later occupied by the first Phocaeen settlement of Emporion (Aquilué 1999). There are other hints of occupation from the end of the seventh century, especially Phoenician and to a much lesser extent Etruscan amphorae, in many settlements on the central coast of Catalonia which continued to be occupied until the Iberian period (Asensio *et al.* 2000; Sanmartí *et al.* 2006; Vives-Ferrándiz 2008). The building remains associated with these finds are negligible to date, but their location on easily defensible sites suggests that they may have been similar to those described above.

This type of settlement thus appears at different moments in different areas, but in all cases, it is preceded by sites in which dispersed houses or small groups of houses dominate. This suggests a type of social organisation which is close to family level, although the existence of large cremation cemeteries, which sometimes comprise hundreds of burials – such as Agullana (Toledo and de Palol 2006) – or even more than 1000 – Can Piteu-Can Roqueta (Sabadell) (López Cachero 2006; 2007) – indicate that wider kinship groups continued to play a fundamental role in the organisation of society and in the forms of territorial occupation. The development of new settlements could reasonably be explained as the result of a new pressure on the environment. This would itself have been a consequence of population growth, which in turn would have forced families to collaborate in order to intensify the subsistence economy and to protect the products of their work.

It is equally important to acknowledge two phenomena of crucial importance to the processes of sociocultural change that occurred between the seventh and the beginning of the sixth centuries BC. That is, in the first place, Phoenician trade, which affected mostly, although not exclusively, the coastal areas and the lower course of the Ebro (Asensio *et al.* 2000; Sanmartí 2009; Vives-Ferrándiz 2008) (Figures 26.4 and 26.5). Here, large numbers of transport amphorae from the south of the Iberian peninsula have been documented

that for the most part must have contained wine, although other foodstuffs like oil and salted fish cannot be excluded. The second point concerns iron metallurgy, for which we have some evidence as early as the eighth century BC at Els Vilars d'Arbeca (Alonso *et al.* 1998: 364). Initially, it was nevertheless almost exclusively used for prestige items such as horse bits, *fibulae*, spits and razor blades until, by the mid-sixth century BC, weapons and tools began to be made of iron. It should be noted that some scholars think that these objects were not locally produced but were imported, mostly from southern France (Rovira 2007). The available evidence hardly supports such a view, however.

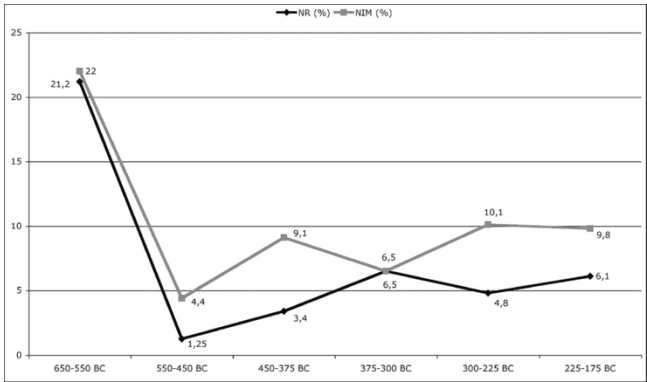


Figure 26.4. Quantitative development of Mediterranean pottery imports.

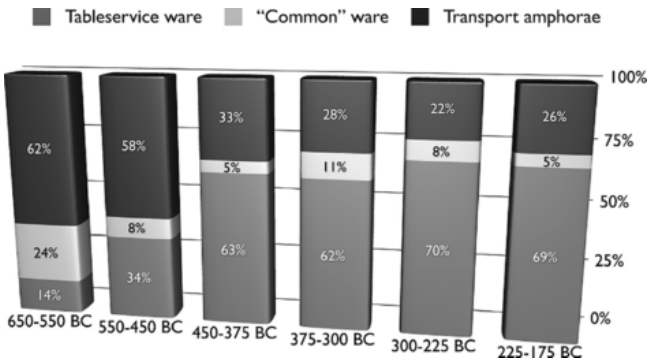


Figure 26.5. Quantitative evolution of different categories of Mediterranean imports.

Times of Change: Big Men of the Early

Iron Age (ca. 700–550 BC)

One of the most notable aspects of the archaeological data uncovered from the end of the seventh century is the existence of indications for the accumulation of wealth for the first time in the history of the area. Perhaps the best evidence is the appearance of a new type of settlement in southern Catalonia and possibly in the north of Valencia (in particular, at el Torelló del Boverot). In the area of the lower Ebro, this type is represented by the site of Aldovesta, which was occupied between the first half of the seventh century and shortly after 600 BC (Mascort *et al.* 1991), and that of Sant Jaume-Mas d'en Serrà (Garcia and Moreno 2008), which is a little later in date (Figure 26.6). While the specific formal and constructive details may be the result of differences in sociopolitical conditions in different periods – increasing violence could, for example, account for the strong defensive walls at Sant Jaume-Mas d'en Serrà – both sites are defined by houses that include spaces for specialised activities and a large storage capacity (Figure 26.4). In the case of Aldovesta, the Phoenician imports (almost exclusively amphorae) exceed 57% of all ceramic finds, and there is evidence for metallurgical activity such as the recycling of bronze scrap. In Sant Jaume-Mas d'en Serrà, Phoenician materials are also abundant (12.3%), but other productive activities at this site include weaving, as indicated by ca. 400 loomweights, and the production of bronze pendants.



Figure 26.6. Reconstruction of Aldovesta and aerial view of Sant Jaume-Mas d'en Serrà.

From all this, we can infer that the communities of the lower Ebro probably developed Big Man-type social organisations between the second half of the seventh and the first half of the sixth century BC. The existence of the large houses described above may remind us of the ‘substantial houses full of weighty possessions’ mentioned by Netting in relation to the villages of the northwestern coast of America (Johnson and Earle 2000: 212) and more generally suggest the presence of individuals who, as a result of their courage, management capability and (interested) generosity, were able to control strategic resources and to accumulate

considerable wealth.

Another piece of evidence in favour of this interpretation is the wide distribution of imported Phoenician foodstuffs in the north of Valencia and southern Catalonia, among which wine must have been particularly prominent. The volume of imports documented between ca. 650– 575 BC in the sites of the area mentioned above – mostly food – is much higher than that of any subsequent period before the Roman conquest ([Figures 26.4 and 26.5](#)) ([Sanmartí 2009](#)). It does not seem exaggerated to me, therefore, to interpret this unusual volume of imports in terms of the ‘generosity’ that defines ‘Big Men’ in relation to their communities. It could even involve other communities through competitive exchanges with other ‘Big Men’ at interregional ceremonies, in which representatives from distant groups might have taken part. We do not have any direct evidence for such ceremonies, but we must consider that some of the many unexplored sites which have produced abundant remains of Phoenician amphorae on the surface could be precisely such a place, or otherwise might have taken place near or in the large houses described above. Either way, the large number of transport vessels and the virtual absence of tableware, Phoenician or otherwise, show that, during these feasts, the quantities of goods consumed were more important than the style in which they were drunk and eaten, and we can therefore interpret these ceremonies as competitive and so-called ‘entrepreneurial’ feasts as defined by Dietler ([1990; 1996; 1999](#)). Such feasts are indeed characteristic of the social contexts such as the early Iron Age one under consideration.

It is important to point out, however, that in the final moments of the early Iron Age, the relative weight of imported tableware grew considerably in relation to transport vessels, as can be seen at the site of Barranc de Gàfols, where the former makes up 47% of imported pottery ([Sanmartí *et al.* 2000](#)). In Turó del Calvari (Vilalba dels Arcs, Tarragona), where an isolated tower-like building has been excavated, which may have been the residence of a local leader ([Sardà 2008](#)), tableware also dominates in numbers

much higher than what would have been necessary for domestic consumption. The shapes of these vessels all relate to the consumption of food and are often local interpretations of Phoenician types. From all of this, we may infer the growing importance of feasting just before the mid-sixth century BC, when a privileged social group emphasised its position through the exhibition of forms of consumption which differ from those of the rest of the population, and which are often foreign in character (Dietler 1990; 1996; 1999).

North of the Ebro, the available data are less clear, especially because our information about settlement sites is more limited. However, recent work on cemeteries has drawn attention to tombs with differentiated grave goods, which include among other prestige items – such as weapons, horse bits or small Greek and Phoenician perfume bottles – objects which can be related to feasting – *simpula* (ladles), cauldron stands, iron spits, large bronze bowls and shallow dishes, mortars and Phoenician vessels for transporting food and drink (Sanmartí-Grego 1993; Lucas 2003–2004; Graells 2008). Quite often, these elements all appear united in the same burial and probably show an accumulation of wealth (Aquilué *et al.* 2008: 178–84). It might be possible that these reflect the role of the deceased in feasts like those described above, and that they might thus represent a sociological situation similar to the one we have proposed for the Ebro valley. The increased presence of weapons and objects associated with horse riding (horse bits) similarly suggests that coercive power was increasing.

In the same area, the accumulation of wealth is also demonstrated by the so-called ‘silo fields’ that first appear from the end of the seventh century. These are groups of grain storage units in a confined space, which cannot be interpreted as domestic reserves and which reveal centralised control over production (Asensio *et al.* 2002: 128–30). It is necessary to point out, however, that the volume of Phoenician imports is notably inferior in this area, especially north of the Llobregat, which could imply a lesser importance of redistribution and of competitive interchange

ceremonies, unless, of course, these involved other products that are less obvious in the archaeological record.

Other indications of the accumulation of wealth, albeit slightly earlier, are deposits of bronze objects that are mostly found in the interior of Catalonia and that largely date to the eighth century BC. The most important hoard is from Llavorsí, high up on a mountain pass in the Pyrenees and dated to ca. 700 BC. It consisted of 148 objects, most of which (90%) were ornamental items or related to clothing. Like most hoards, it is usually seen either as a hidden cache of metal destined for recasting, as a votive deposit (Gallart 1991: 178) or as evidence for metal trade (Francès 2005: 63; López Cachero 2007: 108). But the fact that it comprises mainly whole objects, the majority of which originate from southern France beyond the Pyrenees (from the regions of Jura-Savoy-Hautes Alpes and Languedoc), allows us to see it simply as wealth, perhaps accumulated through competitive interchange, or acquired as dowry in marital interchanges.

In sum, there is considerable evidence to support the hypothesis that certain communities experienced important institutional changes from perhaps the mid-eighth and certainly the mid-seventh century BC, which allowed some individuals to enrich themselves. The evidence for widespread redistribution, especially in the area around the Ebro, allows us to suppose they might have been organised as *potlatch*-type societies, characterised by growing competition in the accumulation and redistribution of wealth, and presumably by an exchange of dowries for women, even if this last point is hard to substantiate.

The key question is how and why this situation developed and whether this type of society could have evolved from a 'Great Man'-type society, as Godelier (1991) proposed but could not demonstrate with anthropological evidence. Did it arise from local groups defined by direct exchanges of women, i.e. without dowries, and by power wielded by those factions who had hereditary access to the sacred objects that were necessary for initiation rites? This would exclude the accumulation of wealth as a prerequisite for holding power. According to Godelier's hypothesis, the transformation of a

‘Great Man’ into a ‘Big Man’ society requires two conditions: first, that women were exchanged for dowries in the former societies, even if not primarily (in known cases, this only occurs with very distant communities); and that competitive exchange existed too, even if it would not be enough to gain power (Godelier 1999: 26).

Current archaeological evidence does not allow easy answers to these questions, but there is nothing to suggest the accumulation of wealth before the end of the eighth century BC. It cannot be excluded, however, that items such as cattle were exchanged that are difficult to trace archaeologically as a form of wealth. Nor is it easy to understand the ways in which women may have been exchanged. As for the possible existence of sacred objects that might have legitimised the power held by some clans, this is also difficult to prove, as they could be items completely deprived of particular traits to make their sacred character evident (Godelier 1999: 23). Mediterranean glass and Baltic amber beads found in different parts of Catalonia around the turn of the second millennium could perhaps be included in this category (Rovira 1995; Rafel *et al.* 2008: 245–48). They do not appear in large quantities, however, and I do not think they indicate control over production or accumulation of wealth, but we could think that they had magical significance; they may also simply have served to display the elevated rank of those wearing these items. To sum up, a positive archaeological identification of ‘Great Man’ societies seems barely possible at the moment. Nevertheless, the sequence documented in northern Iberia does fit Godelier’s evolutionary hypothesis, as we have seen local groups, who were strongly rooted in their territories and lacked competitive exchange until the Late Bronze Age, and the subsequent development of *potlatch* societies.

Either way, as Godelier (1991: 295) himself points out, the changes taking place within the kinship system – and thus the development of the ‘Big Men’ and of *potlatch*-type societies – depend on factors that arise from other spheres of social life, such as the economy. The way I see it for our study region, the most evident – and I think transcendent –

of these changes is population growth, which is clearly visible in the increasing numbers of burials and settlement sites. The need to resolve the problems created by the economic intensification seems to be the ultimate reason behind the changes to the kinship system and the appearance of leadership figures accepted by the rest of the population, despite the additional burden that their existence would have placed on the latter. Among these problems, it might be important to highlight the increase in violence, which may be linked to competition for scarce resources and for which we have plenty of archaeological evidence. This is especially true for the lower Ebro area, where an important number of settlements were destroyed and abandoned between the end of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth centuries BC (including the abovementioned Aldovesta and Barranc de Gàfols).

To maintain that the 'demographic growth-intensification-growth of the political economy' cycle is the basis for these processes of change is not to say that external factors, especially Phoenician trade, had no part in these. If we were to simplify the situation, it could be argued that the former created the sociological conditions in which the products made available by Phoenicians and (in northeastern Catalonia) by Etruscans, wine in the first place, could have been used by Iron Age chiefs to attract and reward their followers, to intensify competitive exchanges and perhaps, if we follow the model put forward by Friedman (1975), to increase the price of marital exchanges and finally to restrict these to a select number of lineages, thereby setting them apart from the rest of the population. From this point of view, external trade no doubt provided great opportunities to consolidate and to deepen social inequalities, but it did not create the material and sociological bases in which they occurred. It is possible that the intensification of competitive exchanges enabled by Phoenician trade favoured the development of greater political entities, possibly as confederates, which in turn may well have laid the basis for the regional political entities that developed under different forms from the mid-sixth century BC onwards. But prior to this date, the continuity of large cemeteries, where an

important part of the population was buried, and the large-scale redistribution of Phoenician imports reveal the persistence of an egalitarian social ethos, which would nevertheless rapidly be replaced by a new ideology that legitimised emerging institutionalised inequalities.

The Iberian Period: Reluctant Inequalities

The available archaeological evidence shows the rapid development of social stratification during the sixth century BC, and from the second half of this century onwards it also indicates the probable appearance of regional political entities. The funerary record is particularly relevant in this regard because the number of burials documented for the Iberian period, i.e. from the mid-sixth century BC, is much lower than that of the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages, while the two periods are approximately of similar duration, and the population undoubtedly increased very much during the Iberian period. The much lower number of burials from ca. 550 BC is all the more notable because burial rites and tomb types remained the same, which is in keeping with the *Urnfield* tradition, and the different figures cannot therefore be imputed to differential conservation.

Thus, whilst we know of ca. 3200 tombs datable to the Late Bronze Age and the early Iron Age, we only have little more than 500 for the whole of the Iberian period, that is, less than a sixth of the earlier number. More precisely, there are only 311 tombs dating to the period between 575–450 BC as compared to the 730 dating from 700–575 BC: in other words, we have less than half as many burials for the early Iberian period. It is also important to note that the number of cemeteries decreases, too. There are 28 cemeteries on record for the period between 700–575 BC, but that number falls to just 12 for the time between the mid-sixth and the end of the fifth centuries. Finally, there is also a notable lack of continuity between most of the known cemeteries. Only those of Coll del Moro de Gandesa, La Pedrera de Vallfogona, La Colomina, La Femosa and La

Muralla Nordeste and Parallí, both near Emporion, appear to have been used beyond 575–550 BC, and only the first two have yielded evidence of long-term continuity. In the case of La Pedrera, this means until the end of the fifth or even the fourth century BC. Other large cemeteries which had remained in use for many centuries, such as Agullana (475 tombs), Can Piteu-Can Roqueta (1058 tombs) or Roques de Sant Formatge (489 tombs), were abandoned between the mid-seventh century and 575 BC. The subsequent (relatively) large Iberian cemeteries (La Solivella, La Palma, l'Oriola, Mianes, Can Canyís) appear by contrast *ex novo* precisely around the mid-sixth century BC.

From this evidence, we might infer a weakening of local communities and of the underlying kinship ties as the essential form of ownership and exploitation of the land, for the cemeteries which they had maintained in the same places for centuries were the materialisation of these ownership relations of the various communities with their physical environment. The decrease in the number of cemeteries, the almost systematic discontinuities in location and the appearance of new cemeteries in other places, especially in the coastal areas, represent, in my opinion, the result of a break with and a profound change in ancestral forms of ownership or, alternatively, of a population change caused by the arrival of immigrants sufficiently powerful to impose such changes.

Second, the radical decrease in the number of tombs suggests that the objective (although perhaps not the subjective) ownership of the land was concentrated in the hands of a few individuals. This conclusion is consistent with the fact that an important part of the funerary remains dated between the mid-sixth and the fifth centuries (again, mostly in the coastal areas) is defined by the presence of iron weapons and/or valuable objects related to clothing and personal hygiene and decoration (*fibulae*, belt buckles, pendants, perfume jars, etc.); some may be seen as magical (Egyptian scarabs). This suggests that these tombs belonged to members of a social group with a high spending power. The low number of burials cannot, therefore, be ascribed to

demographic reasons, and must be explained in strictly social, and perhaps also ideological, terms instead. It is, indeed, possible that the restriction of traditional funerary rites to a limited social group matched a belief in a differentiated nature of the members of this group; in other words, that this limited group had a particular relationship with the supernatural world, from which they derived their power and possibly some kind of other-worldly status. The funerary record thus seems to offer all the elements related to the rise of an aristocracy: (probable) land ownership, possession of the means of physical coercion, consumption of goods which display differences in personal appearance and an ideology which legitimises inequality, and which is based on particular beliefs and rituals.

A separate argument for the creation of a stratified society lies in the volume and nature of the ceramic imports from the mid-sixth century (Figure 26.4 and 26.5) (Sanmartí 2009). These saw a spectacular decrease in numbers, which allows us to suppose that their use was limited to a small section of society from that period onwards. Transport vessels were moreover gradually replaced with tableware – mostly cups – especially of Greek provenance. It probably reached the indigenous communities through the small Phocaeen settlement of Emporion (Empúries-Ampurias), which was founded in the second quarter of the sixth century BC (Aquilué 1999). We may assume that these changes reflect important transformations in the uses of the imported materials in indigenous societies, which in turn may be understood as the consequence of social transformations that changed the nature of at least some of the feasts (Sanmartí *et al.* 2009). Indeed, the formation of an aristocracy and a legitimising ideology to support it would have reduced the importance of competitive feasting, which was based on the large-scale consumption of food and alcoholic beverages, while it would have favoured the development of diacritic ceremonies. These would have been reserved for the aristocracy and their objective would have been to highlight the differences in consumption forms between this group and the majority of the population (Dietler 1990; 1996; 1999). For these reasons, Greek pottery

was used in restricted circles for the consumption of wine of mostly Greek origin, while Greek consumption customs may also have been emulated more or less faithfully. All this contrasts markedly with the mass importations of Phoenician amphorae in the seventh and beginning of the sixth century, and suggests that, from the mid-sixth century onwards, mostly local products, especially beerpackaged in Iberian amphorae, were consumed at the feasts in which the lower ranks of society took part, for example at work feasts, including its *corvée* form (Dietler 1996: 97; 1999: 144), or in ceremonies designed to affirm the global cohesion of the community.

Information about settlement sites, which would allow us to understand better the nature of these transformations, is unfortunately very poor for the sixth and fifth centuries. This is to a large extent the inevitable consequence of the very history of these settlements, most of which continued to be occupied throughout the Iberian period and in some case into Roman times, if not until today. The few known remains of sixth- to fifth-century houses are small single-roomed buildings as in the earlier periods, but it is unlikely that this evidence is representative of the whole range of domestic architecture in this period, and it cannot therefore offer us reliable clues about social relationships.

The political organisation of the region is difficult to recognise before the fourth century BC given the limited settlement evidence, but we may assume that regional political entities did exist. This is particularly plausible in the coastal area north of the Ebro, especially in the far north. The best indication is the construction around 500 BC of a defensive wall around the site of Puig de Sant Andreu (Ullastret), which enclosed an area of about 2.5 ha, which is 10 times larger than any other previously existing settlement. It is the oldest 'public' construction of any real size in the studied territory, with a length of 600 m and towers of 9.5–10 m diameter, eight of which are still preserved (Moret 1996: 375) (Figure 26.7). Building this wall required the mobilisation and centralised organisation of a significant workforce, and its imposing aspect points to

a real 'landscape of power'. Something similar may be seen slightly later at the much smaller settlement of Alorda Park (Calafell; ca. 450 BC), where a major fortification with powerful towers was also built (Asensio *et al.* 2005). We can suppose that Ullastret was already at the time of its construction a political and perhaps ceremonial centre that controlled an extensive territory. The lack of information about other major sites of the fourth and third centuries such as Tarragona or Burriac unfortunately leaves us in the dark about other possible politico-territorial structures. The available information about other settlements in the coastal area nevertheless points to a hierarchical and somewhat complex settlement pattern. Turó de ca n'Oliver is, for example, a sizeable open town (more than one ha), but there are also other smaller centres, such as the aforementioned Alorda Park or Mas Castelllar de Pontós (Pons 2002), that are smaller than 0.5 ha, while there also exist even smaller rural settlements. Despite the evident limitations, these data suggest a hierarchical and centralised regional organisation for the coastal area.

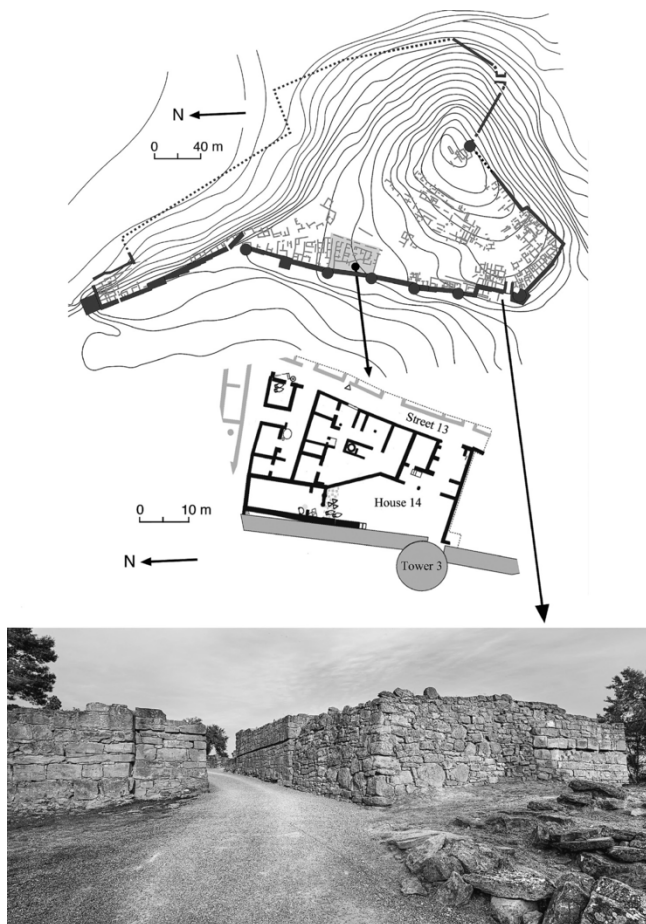


Figure 26.7. Plan and view of Puig de Sant Andreu, Ullastret.

In brief, therefore, I think it is likely that, during the sixth century BC, some ‘Big Men’ of the early Iron Age managed to extend their power over a large number of local communities, in many cases probably with violence. This, in turn, gave their clan a different and superior status in the community and presumably rights of land ownership, distinct funerary rites and the legitimate use of power as sanctioned by a unique relationship with the ultimate source of power, i.e. the supernatural world. It is likely that, during this process, the dominant clan may have taken over the chiefly lineages of local communities, incorporating them

into new regional political structures, and that the language of kinship relations continued to play an important role in social organisation and power relations. The hierarchical settlement structures of the coastal areas thus probably reflect those of the clan itself, with local chiefs subordinate to a leader who presided at once over the clan and the regional polity.

In the interior, territorial settlement patterns that are typical of the early Iron Age seem largely to persist, but in the lower Aragon area, there is evidence for a specific type of isolated site during the second half of the sixth century, which may perhaps be seen as aristocratic in character and which suggests a more decentralised system. These sites are relatively isolated tower-like houses built on elevated positions. Inside, evidence for specialised activities have been found, which may demonstrate control over the means of production and major feasting activities (Moret 2002). Even if the evidence is somewhat limited, it does point to heterarchical forms of political organisation that appear to have resulted in a settlement pattern not unlike that of earlier periods. However, taking into account the funerary evidence, there is no reason to assume an absence of social differentiation and elite formation, as this process may involve 'a fragmentation of separate and potentially opposed power sources' (Johnson and Earle 2000: 260) and does not necessarily lead to centralised hierarchical settlement patterns (Crumley 1995).

In the contexts described above, the rapid development of iron metallurgy after the mid-sixth century BC makes perfect sense, as it becomes a widely used material for making weapons and agricultural tools. As Kim (2001) has pointed out, a technological transformation of this sort implies important costs and risks, which elites will only take if the benefits from innovation outweigh the inconveniences. In my opinion, it is likely that the development of iron technology, especially for agricultural activities, would only be attractive to elites if their effective control over land and peasants tied to it, as established during the sixth century BC, would guarantee the profitability of their investments

into large-scale technological renovations. This would result from both the extension of the cultivated land and the development of an intensive Eurasian-ecotype agriculture, whose efficiency is directly linked to the use of iron implements (Wolf 1982: 45–48). One immediate consequence of this development was probably the enrichment of an Iberian aristocracy and an increase in the territory's productive capacity, which led in turn to the reduction of agricultural risks and to further population growth, as is clearly visible in the archaeological record from the mid-fifth century BC. As we shall see, the consequences for the later development of Iberian society were considerable.

The Development of an Administrative System

Our records for the coastal areas are particularly rich for the period between the end of the fifth century BC and the Roman conquest of around 200 BC. The number of settlement sites rose spectacularly in these centuries, and the size of the concentrated habitation centres also increased substantially. This indicates significant population growth, which in turn may be linked to the progressive spread of iron tools from the sixth century onwards and the consequent expansion of agricultural production. The decrease in tree pollen during these centuries also lends weight to this conclusion (Burjachs *et al.* 1999). For the first time in the history of the study area, the landscape must have appeared completely humanised, except for the mountainous areas at higher altitudes.

The pattern of territorial occupation in this period leaves little doubt about the strong hierarchical and centralised organisation of settlement and, indeed, society itself in the coastal region of Catalonia. There were three great centres of 10 ha or more in size (Ullastret, Burriac and Tarragona from north to south: Figure 26.8) that seem to have presided over political territories in which there were many other smaller settlements, which were also hierarchically organised

according to size and function (Sanmartí 2004).



Figure 26.8. Map of northern Iberia.

At the highest level, only Ullastret, which is a kind of *dipolis* made up of two different but closely situated centres (Puig de Sant Andreu and, 400 m northwards, Illa d'en Reixac), is relatively well known. It was probably the capital of the Indiketes, whose name we know from literary and numismatic sources. Puig de Sant Andreu is a large political and ceremonial centre with complex fortifications, large residences, some of which measured around 700 sq m (Martín *et al.* 2004), and with at least three religious buildings of evidently Greek influence (Figure 26.7). Other notable features and prestige items include substantial quantities of imported Greek and Punic ceramics, often of

great quality, and the generalised use of writing, as is evident on many different types of documents (Figure 26.9).

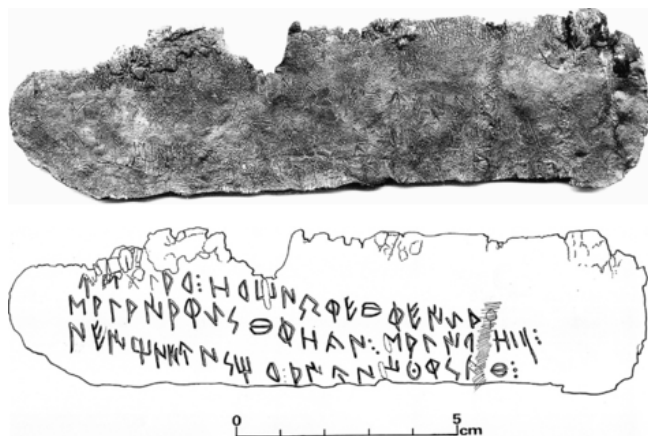


Figure 26.9. Iberian inscription on a lead sheet, from Castellet de Banyoles.

The existence of an extramural workshop area is also noteworthy (Martín *et al.* 2008). The settlement of Illa d'en Reixac is as yet poorly known as compared to Puig de Sant Andreu (Martín *et al.* 1999). The fact that some of the houses discovered at the former site are notably smaller than those at Puig de Sant Andreu probably indicates that it was partly inhabited by people of inferior status, perhaps artisans or farmers. Overall, the inhabited sectors covered an area of approximately 15 ha. Ullastret thus shows all the features of a city, if we take this term to refer to a compact concentration of houses and buildings with a diverse sociological and economic identity, far beyond the social relations of neighbourhood and family ties (Weber 1986: 3–33); or, to put it as Crumley, to 'a place that has a resident population comprising members of all classes' and is characterised by 'the presence of separate areas of the site that quartered the wealthy, artisans, merchants, and various groups of skilled and unskilled laborers' (Crumley 1995: 29). In this view, there should also be indications for active exchanges of urban products for those from the city's agricultural hinterland. Although the evidence is poor at the moment, such exchanges seem nonetheless highly probable,

if we take into account the large number of rural sites in the area around the settlement (Plana and Martín 1999) and the fact that a particular kind of pottery with white painted decoration, which was certainly made at Ullastret, was widely exported to the Indikete territory.

It is important to note that the only two cemeteries on record and dating to the centuries between the fifth century BC and the Roman conquest are located in the immediate vicinity of two of these large settlement sites, namely Ullastret and Burriac. The latter was probably the capital of the Laeetani, who lived immediately to the south of the Indiketes, on the central coast of Catalonia (Figure 26.8). This confirms, I believe, the particular symbolic significance of these large centres and the suggestion that they were home to the members of the highest aristocratic clans who held responsibility over political, social and religious matters in those regional polities.

Other lesser chiefs fulfilled similar functions at a micro-regional and local scale, as can be deduced from the presence of elite elements in other settlement sites that cannot be interpreted as regional capitals. The largest of these include the settlements of 2 to 4 ha in size, but these are unfortunately poorly documented. Ongoing excavations at sites such as Sant Julià de Ramis, which seems to have been dependent on Ullastret (Burch *et al.* 2001), and Turó de ca n'Oliver (Asensio *et al.* 2000–2001), in Laeetania, have failed to bring to light complex fortifications or large houses, and the volume and quality of the imports are considerably inferior to that documented at Ullastret – but superior to those attested in villages, hamlets and small dispersed rural settlements (Sanmartí 2009: 73–75).

A good example of the settlements of the third type is the site of Puig Castellar de Santa Coloma de Gramenet, a village of ancient Laeetania which was presumably inhabited most of all by peasants living in small single-room houses (Ferrer and Rigo 2003). Even at these sites, however, valuable objects have been found such as a large iron firedog, spurs and weapons (Sanmartí *et al.* 1992) which probably belonged to members of an aristocratic lineage

who controlled the area and who probably lived in the one large building situated on the highest point of the site but which is unfortunately poorly preserved. It seems obvious to assume that a place like this would have had a local chief to assure connections between this community and the regional administration. The discovery of written documents of a probably administrative character supports this view (Velaza 2003).

A second, very different example is provided by the site of Alorda Park, situated in the northeastern part of ancient Cessetania, whose capital Cesse lies under modern Tarragona (Figure 26.7). It is a small settlement of ca. 0.3 ha that was defended by massive fortifications by the mid-fifth century BC and that included, by the third century, a small number of large houses (Asensio *et al.* 2005). The volume, variety and quality of the imports suggest a high purchasing power of its inhabitants, whom we might see as members of the local aristocracy. The site may therefore be interpreted as an aristocratic citadel from which a small number of families of high social status controlled the surrounding territory. In this area, a large number of small rural sites have been documented, some of which have been excavated with results that are very different from what has been found at Alorda Park. The small sites are generally open or poorly fortified settlements, even if some are formally very similar to the large residences known from urban sites. This has been taken to suggest that they were at once production units and elite residences, whilst others, often poorly preserved, were probably little more than single houses inhabited by peasants. Furthermore, some of them were clearly linked to important areas where grain was stored in silos (Asensio *et al.* 2001)

Although the volume and quality of our evidence are still very uneven, and often insufficient, the available data do suggest that several of the coastal areas knew centralised forms of sociopolitical organisation. These made it possible to control the entire political territory through various but related aristocratic lineages that were hierarchically organised and probably structured through patron–client

relationships, as Ruiz (1998; 2000) has repeatedly proposed. The politico-administrative and regional settlement structures would therefore roughly mirror the kinship-based organisation of the communities. Lineages of higher rank were based in the large power centres, and their members were buried in the associated cemeteries, while the secondary lineages of the aristocratic system may be traced to other minor settlements. Like the rest of the society, they do not, however, show up in the funerary record.

It is also important to point out that we have some evidence for elite control over production, in other words for taxation, which implies an administrative system. I refer to the large groups of subterranean cereal deposits, the so-called *campos de silos* (silo fields), which were not only important food reserves for people in times of scarcity – and thus helped to legitimise the elites – but which also represented accumulations of staple wealth which could be mobilised for different purposes, including maintenance of an administrative apparatus or the import of prestige items. The written documents, which become notably more common from the end of the fifth century BC, include a fair number of texts written on lead sheets (Figure 26.9) that are supposed to be accounts, though this cannot be stated beyond any doubt, since Iberian language is still largely unknown. They would therefore attest to the creation of an administrative system (Sanmartí 2004; 2009)

External literary sources offer few explicit facts about the political organisation of these communities. The only exception is the territory of Edeta further south on the Valencian coast, where a clearly hierarchical settlement pattern has been documented, too. Here, Polybius refers to a *dynastes* or *archegos*, called Edecon, which indicates the existence of a monarchy. Given the similarities in territorial organisation and because of the geographical and cultural proximity between Valencia and the Catalanian coast, one might assume but by no means prove that similar institutions could have existed in the latter region.

The hierarchical settlement patterns of the coastal region

clearly contrast with those of the lower Ebro area, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the territory that stretches from central Catalonia to western Aragon. In the former – the land of the Ilercaones – only small, strongly fortified habitation sites are attested until the second half of the third century BC, when a substantial town (4.5 ha) was created at Castellet de Banyoles (Tivissa), maybe at the initiative of the Carthaginians, as suggested by its Punic-type defensive wall and the general historical context in the years immediately before the Second Punic War (Sanmartí *et al.* 2012). In the latter region, which is reported by historical sources as inhabited by the Ausetani, the Lacetani and the Ilergetes (Figure 26.8), the largest settlements measure less than 3 ha (Molí d’Espígol and el Castellvell respectively around 2 and 0.8 ha in size) and others are villages of around 0.3 ha (Anseresa, els Estinclells), or spacious and strongly fortified sites but without dense habitation (Turó del Montgròs measures 9 ha but was largely open space). They were also protected by relatively impressive fortifications. The rest are small farms or hamlets, which are still largely unknown. Overall, the larger and densely occupied sites correspond to the second or, much more frequently, third size-type of coastal habitation sites and cannot be considered as cities, even if they may have included ‘special’ buildings that stood out by size and complexity such as the relatively large so-called ‘unique’ building at el Molí d’Espígol (Cura 2006: 63–66). These buildings may represent aristocratic residences. It seems plausible that these larger sites played a central role locally, but the general settlement pattern suggests forms of sociopolitical organisation that were different from the highly centralised patterns of the coastal areas. These possibly involved heterarchical power relations, characterised by the existence of different social segments, each accessing different sources of power (e.g. the economy, the military or the religious sphere) and partly overlapping to balance each other.

The evidence for a decentralised organisation in the interior does not rule out aristocratic groups. Cemeteries are, for a start, barely known, which indicates that formal burials were here also restricted to very small upper sections of

society. Further indications are provided by engraved stelae and other commemorative monuments that are decorated with weapons and combat scenes, and suggest an aristocratic ethos closely linked to the use of violence (Figure 26.10). Literary sources offer explicit evidence for the sociopolitical situation in the interior around the third and beginning of the second centuries BC: Greek and Latin authors refer to a dual monarchy among the Ilergetes, headed at that time by Indibilis (called Andobales by Polybius) and Mandonius. Polybius calls the former *basileus*, while Livy uses the term *regulus*. It is also uncertain whether the Ilergete monarchy was always dual, because the earliest references to Indibilis (218 BC) do not mention Mandonius, and one Bilistages is the only name that Livy gives for a king of the Ilergetes in 195 BC, 10 years after the death of Indibilis and Mandonius as a consequence of their revolt against Rome in 205 BC. It is nevertheless also the case that both persons are generally mentioned in association in references to the Second Punic War in Spain, even if Indibilis has a higher profile. There is also some evidence for dual monarchy among Celtic peoples more generally, most notably in Bibracte (the capital of the Aeduans, in modern Burgundy), where the brothers Diviciacus and Dumnorix are reported to be in charge of the *oppidum* and its territory respectively.



Figure 26.10. Iberian stela from Palermo, Caspe.

We may assume, even if we cannot prove it, that a similar division of power and power sources also existed among the Iltergetes, though it is unclear what the power basis of the

joint kings would have been. Be it as it may, I would point out that while the Ilergetes did undoubtedly constitute an important regional polity (Fatás 1987), a heterarchic, non-centralised type of organisation, and power relations apparently existed in which different sectors of the aristocratic establishment controlled different sources of power and wealth, and were occasionally able to acquire – but also to lose – the supreme power. This would appear to have happened to Indibilis himself, who seems to have been removed from power in 218–217 BC. He resurfaces in our sources in 211 BC, when he intervenes in favour of the Carthaginians at the head of 7000 Suesetani, another of the Iberian peoples of the interior region. The fact that his troops were not Ilergetes might indicate that he was not ruling over them at that moment, and it is likely that Punic support enabled him to reclaim power among his own people.

Another institution of the Ilergetes mentioned by Livy was the *concilium*, which may have been some kind of supreme council. It was summoned by Mandonius in 205 BC, after the aforementioned Ilergete revolt against Rome and the defeat by the Romans, which caused Indibilis' death. Given that the *concilium* was intended to consider accusations against the instigators of the revolt, we may infer the existence of different political parties, perhaps based on patron–client relations that vertically structured the whole of society. There would also seem to have been a certain degree of democratic power, which enabled the *concilium* to surrender Mandonius and some of his supporters to the Romans. The Ilergetes' loyalty to Rome in the great Iberian revolt of 197–196 BC could similarly be interpreted as the rise to power of a pro-Roman faction and the election of leaders in favour of this policy.

As Crumley (1995: 30–31) has pointed out, in societies of this type, complex networks of power relations exist that may support an apparatus of state and are capable of forging confederations between states, and it is precisely this that we may see in Indibilis' case, who is repeatedly mentioned as leading contingents of other northern Iberian peoples,

such as Suessetani, Lacetani and Ausetani.

Conclusion

The processes of social and cultural change documented in northern Iberia between the Late Bronze Age and the Roman conquest appear as a classic case of the formation of stratified societies and regional political organisation from a world of much older small-scale communities. Population growth, I have argued, played a particularly important role in these processes, although it surely was not the only element. Increased population is nevertheless likely to have been critically important to the first forms of social hierarchisation, that is, to the formation of 'Big Man'-type societies, which led to the appearance of clearly differentiated elites and regional political entities. The possibilities for expansion or even consolidation of these structures would still have been minimal without the technological changes enabled by the use of iron for agricultural implements (and weapons) and not just for prestige items as had been the case in the eighth-seventh centuries BC. Because of the potential of iron tools for economic intensification and to contribute to the accumulation of wealth, I have argued that elites actively encouraged the adoption of this innovation. The ensuing population increase is, in my view, an unintended consequence of these changes, which in turn led, at least in the coastal areas, to the creation of an increasingly centralised administrative system a few generations later. This is most evident from the rapid spread of writing and its use for accounting and taxation, while the numerous grain-storage facilities offer another indication of elite control over production. In the interior, by contrast, rather different decentralised and possibly more democratic forms of organisation developed, which nevertheless did not prevent the formation of at least one important polity, corresponding to the Ilergetes, which played an important political and military role during the Second Punic War.

A final point worth noting is that these political entities eventually disappeared or were at least substantially

transformed with the Roman conquest. Many of the settlements, especially centres of power such as Ullastret, were destroyed or abandoned around 200 BC and, with very few exceptions, were never again occupied. It is surely also significant that in the second and first centuries BC Iberian coins were produced by many different mints that were distributed across the various political territories examined in this chapter. I believe this is a clear indication of the fragmentation of these and other polities of lesser size and importance, which could possibly reflect the kinship groups previously integrated into the Iberian clientship system and now destined to be dissolved in the new system imposed by Rome.

Whether the political entities that existed at the time of the Second Punic War and Roman conquest should be called 'states' is ultimately a question of mere semantics and one that is largely dependent on the definition used; it is in any case likely to be disputed. For Lull and Risch (1995: 97–101), evidence of private property and elite control over the means of production is an indispensable feature and in itself sufficient to assert the existence of a state, regardless of the society's territorial and human size. Johnson and Earle (2000: 35, 305), by contrast, think that a state is characterised by a multi-ethnic and large population that runs into the hundreds of thousands of people. For them, administrative and institutional complexity and organisation, as implied by large settlement sizes, are critical indicators of a state. Crumley (1995: 32), however, believes that heterarchic structures as she has argued existed in the Iron Age Celtic world must be regarded as states. To opt for one or another of these definitions would not necessarily take us much further in our understanding of the societies or processes of change under study.

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27 Who Lives There? Settlements, Houses and Households in Iberia

Helena Bonet-Rosado and Consuelo Mata-Parreño

Abstract

The analysis of building techniques, house typologies and the organisation and use of space is a necessary first step towards the definition of the domestic unit. At this initial stage, we concentrate on the economic, social and cultural activities of those who lived in them. In a settlement, the size and complexity of the dwellings, as well as the richness of the domestic equipment, reveal social differences between the elite and others, as well as gender-related variation. Bioarchaeological data can supplement the information about the economic resources managed by each family group. All of this enables us to look beyond the functionality of objects, building technology or settlement type and to consider issues such as the social and symbolic significance of objects and houses.

On Iberians

‘Iberian’ is the term used by Classical authors to refer to the various pre-Roman peoples of the western coast of the Mediterranean. They occupied a wide coastal strip from the Guadalquivir in Andalusia (Spain) to the Herault in France (600–100 BC). The concept of Iberian culture is an archaeological construct, which encompasses a wide variety of peoples. The Iberians achieved a high level of urbanisation, a complex economy based on agriculture,

varying levels of trade, standardised funerary rituals, social hierarchies and a political organisation based on independent territories. These are characterised by a complex and hierarchical settlement pattern that comprised towns, villages, hamlets, fortifications and farmsteads, as well as spaces for cult and cemeteries (Bernabeu *et al.* 1987; Ruiz and Molinos 1998; Mata *et al.* 2009b). The Iberian groups who lived in the region of Valencia, the area on which we centre this work, were known in the Classical sources as Ilercavones, Edetani and Contestani. Many of these sites have been extensively excavated and have contributed much to our knowledge of Iberian culture, especially regarding territorial organisation and the architectural and socio-economic aspects of settlements.

Recent theoretical and methodological advances now enable us to approach the study of the ancient world from a variety of angles. In line with developments in landscape and survey archaeology, we tend to focus on the lower end of the settlement scale, that is, on domestic spaces. The study of these can be done from different perspectives with the aim of learning about the people who inhabited these spaces and how they related to each other. Gender archaeology is the theoretical field that has reinvigorated the study of domestic spaces by stressing their social and everyday aspects (González-Marcén 2008).

We are relatively well informed about Iberian culture, including topics such as urban organisation, building techniques, procurement and use of raw materials, the time needed to build a house and what defines a house (Bonet and Pastor 1984; Pons *et al.* 1994; Bonet and Guérin 1995; Belarte 1997; Bonet *et al.* 2000; Belarte *et al.* 2009). Functional analysis of domestic space has been based on the content and distribution of domestic portable finds and equipment in so many and such diverse works that it is impossible to name them all here. Diversity is the norm, both geographically and chronologically.

However, family structure has received much less attention, even if it can be associated with aspects such as the number and organisation of rooms, circulation between

spaces and access from outside. Studies of social organisation and gender rely more on burial and iconographic evidence than on the evidence of domestic spaces (Ruiz Rodríguez 1998; Rísquez and Hornos 2005). An exception worth noting is the work by Guérin (1999; 2005).

Ideally, it seems to us, we should compare information gleaned from houses, settlements, territory and cemeteries in order to gain a better understanding of family structures. This is, however, rather complicated because of a lack of sufficient information concerning house, habitat, territory and cemetery. It is nevertheless possible to find relevant evidence on intrapersonal relationships in the domestic sphere and within the settlement itself:

- In a tomb, the burial is the product of the living who bury their dead.
- Daily activities and interactions of inhabitants take place in a house, settlement and territory. The way in which a house is built and how it develops is also a reflection of its inhabitants and their life cycles.

The examples that may be used to discuss this topic are numerous. In this chapter, we will focus on the central districts of the Valencia region (Figure 27.1), where our evidence is exceptional – despite a lack of burial evidence. We propose an analysis at two levels:

- micro-spatial level defined by the domestic sphere, i.e. the house, where economic, social and cultural activities of a family took place;
- intermediate level of neighbourhoods, where relationships between households are established through production and religious and social interaction.



Figure 27.1. Map of the region of Valencia showing sites discussed.

The first of these levels is the most complicated one because of the dynamism and transformations of houses during the lifetime of their occupants. When excavating a dwelling, we can find the last objects in use but also some which were no longer used, and we can see and date structural changes but others will inevitably escape analysis (Gnivecki 1987). The challenge is to write a ‘biography of settlement’ (Herbich and Dietler 2009), which we understand as a history of houses and their inhabitants.

What Were Iberian Houses Like?

Iberian houses display a wide variety of plans, sizes and uses of space (Belarte *et al.* 2009). This variety of types, together with their household items and equipment, make up the available data for analysing the various levels of the family and social organisation of the Iberians.

Once a house is architecturally defined, the difficulty arises in defining the use of the different rooms, because if the presence of equipment and household items can help us, we must not forget that certain items can have multiple uses and that activities can be moved around the house, especially with the passing of time.

Urban analysis becomes more complex when houses have one or more upper floors. The difficulty then lies in determining which items among the debris of the floor and mud-brick walls belonged to the upper floors and terraces. As a result, the upper storeys tend to be poorly defined.

Mud Architecture

The building materials used for the houses were mud, wood and stone, but mud is, above all, the predominant and most visible element (Bonet and Pastor 1984) (Figure 27.2c). The houses were constructed on a stone platform, between 0.5 m and 1 m tall, on which mud-brick walls were built. The entire building, inside and outside, was covered with mud and lime-washed. The interior of some of the houses was painted in shades of red, blue and black and sometimes with decorative motifs (Roldán *et al.* 2005). The floors consisted of beaten earth and were in exceptional cases covered with mud-brick or stone paved. The roofs were flat and made of wooden beams, woven vegetation and a thick layer of mud. The roofs of larger rooms and those with upper storeys were reinforced with central wooden columns. In many settlements, especially those built against a slope, stone and mud-brick steps have been found which allowed access to the upper storeys from both inside and outside.

The entrance to the houses was between 0.8 and 1 m wide, usually in a side-wall, and could be closed with a wooden door complete with iron locks and keys. Some extra-wide

doors suggest that carts passed through them to enter open or partially covered courtyards.

Domestic equipment is scarce and usually limited to mud-brick benches, hearths, ovens, storage areas, presses, olive mills and mud-brick larders. There is very little direct evidence for furniture apart from small fragments of carved wood or carbonised woven esparto grass, but we know of chairs and looms from painted pottery and stone reliefs and sculptures (Ruano 1990) (Figure 27.4).



Figure 27.4. Painted vase from Edeta (Tossal de San Miguel, Lliria, Valencia).

An Iberian settlement would have looked like a compact group of houses along narrow streets that all had a very similar appearance on the outside. Most houses were white-washed, had terraces and few openings for ventilation.

Core Domestic Space

The typology of house plans and the distribution of domestic areas help us to understand the organisation of the family group who inhabited it. The personal belongings and domestic equipment in the houses are, however, no less crucial for defining uses of and activities in the various spaces of a house. Although we lack a standard house type for the whole Iberian area, we do know of three aspects shared among all (Bonet and Guérin 1995):

- The hearth is a prominent place, where domestic activities such as preparing and cooking food were carried out. It can be accessed directly from the street, from a different room or from the courtyard. Sometimes it is the only meeting and sleeping area for the family, but other times it is in a separate room next to the main one. The hearth could be a simple circular or square feature of hardened mud or with an elevated wall like a *tannur* (cooking stand).
- The area dedicated to sleeping is hard to identify in the absence of clear defining elements such as decoration or equipment. The organisation of the house indicates that, in most cases, any area could be used for sleeping, preferably near the hearth of the upper storeys. Bedrooms, or thalamos, that is, rooms exclusively used for sleeping in, were probably only present in the large mansions, as was the case in other areas of the Mediterranean (Fantar 1998: 40; Spatafora 2003: 75; Fiedler 2005: 113 and 115).
- The larder or storage room was preferably placed at the back of the house, away from the passage areas and protected from light. There is nevertheless no lack of alternative systems such as underground silos placed inside or outside the house. In houses with many rooms, one of them could have been destined solely for storage; this room is generally smaller than the others and sometimes equipped with mud-brick benches along the walls. In addition to these storerooms, some settlements had raised granaries, communal warehouses or fields of silos (Gracia and Munilla 2000; Pérez Jordà 2000; Pons *et al.* 1994).

Other Spaces

Besides the kitchen, the sleeping quarters and the storage rooms, other activities took place in these same rooms or in specific ones inside or outside the house. From ethnographic studies, we know that milling was a daily activity carried out by women in a domestic context. From the fifth century BC onwards, the Iberian querns were rotary and made of

two pieces (Figures 27.2 and 27.3): a passive bottom piece and an active top piece. There were small ones (ca. 40 cm in diameter) which could easily be used by one person and which were found in any part of the house; they were found in storage, taken apart or discarded. The larger mills (ca. 60 cm in diameter) were usually placed on circular stone platforms and were not portable. They were installed in the centre of a room and operated in a standing position by one or two people, who made the millstone rotate (Bonet and Mata 2002: 187).

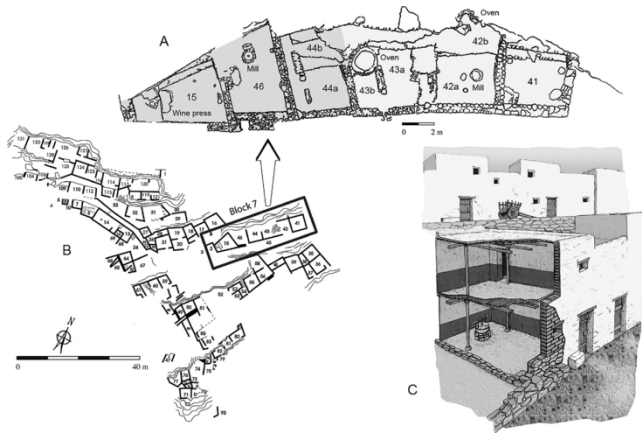


Figure 27.2. House plans from Edeta (Tossal de San Miguel, Lliria, Valencia).

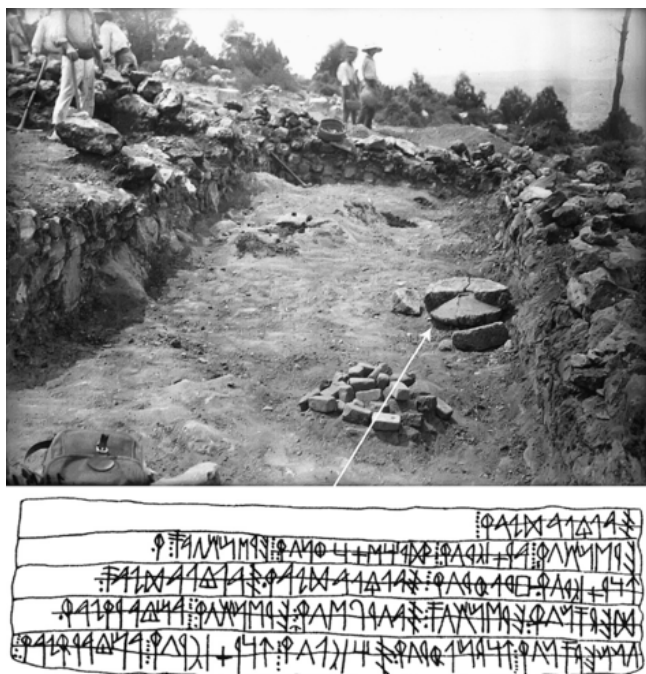


Figure 27.3. La Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent, Valencia).

Until recently, querns were considered indispensable in any Iberian house (Bonet and Guérin 1995; Belarte *et al.* 2009), but we now also know of houses, or separate rooms outside houses, with one or more querns or houses with no querns at all. The flour produced by the bigger mills and in houses with multiple querns would have been more than the daily amount required for one family. This suggests that those families without a quern would have gone to private or communal installations to mill their grain (Pérez Jordà *et al.* 2000). Because flour is such a basic ingredient, it is very likely to have become an element of social inequality (Mata *et al.* 2009b: 148–50; Iborra *et al.* 2010: 112). In Room 48 of La Bastida de les Alcusses and 32 of El Castellet de Bernabé (Fletcher *et al.* 1965: 234–36; Guérin 2003: 124–25), a lead inscription was found with the mills (Figure 27.3), which we take as an indication that their occupants oversaw not only agricultural activities but also administered the production of surpluses and their commercialisation. This administration may well have been taken care of by women,

as is suggested by both the archaeological record (Guérin 2005: 262–63) and written sources. Justin, a second-century AD Roman author, who collected information from other writers about the peoples of the Iberian peninsula, reports, for instance, that women were in charge of the administration of houses and fields, while the men were out fighting and pillaging (Justin 44.3).

The oven was a structure that took up a large space, and it also required a considerable amount of timber to function. Once lit, it needed to be used as efficiently as possible because it took a long time to reach the necessary temperature, although it would maintain heat for a long time. Some Iberian ovens may be found outside the house and were used communally, but others were inside the house for private use; again, not all houses had an oven. An exceptional case is house 1 in Edeta, where there are two ovens and a large mill, which together take up two of the three rooms on the lower floor of the house (Figure 27.2a and b). We regards these ovens as private, much like the Roman *pistrinum* or bakery, and both the oven and mill could have been used by other inhabitants of Edeta, presumably in exchange for payment in kind such as bread or flour, as was often the case in traditional rural societies (Pérez Jordà *et al.* 2000; Albir 2010).

Another task that was usually assigned to women was spinning and weaving, even when it took place outside the domestic sphere (Wright 1996) (Figure 27.4). In Iberian houses, there was no separate room for these activities. Whorls and loomweights, which indicate the use of spindles and looms, have been found in most if not all houses, and are always associated with maintenance, food preparation, socialisation, and so on. These pieces have even been found in storage rooms, which is evidence that the looms were removed from passage and meeting areas and stored away when not in use. On the other hand, the ease with which the spindles could be moved and used allowed women and girls to use any place at any time of day, even between other chores, to spin. This might explain the large numbers of spindle whorls found almost anywhere in the settlements

(Bonet and Mata [2002](#): 190).

This does not mean that all cloth was identical or that all weavers were equally skilled, and it has indeed been observed that ‘among the Iberians there is a custom, at certain festivities, to honour with gifts women who can show to have woven more and more beautiful cloths’ (Rabanal [1985](#): 207) ([Figure 27.4](#)).

Rituals to obtain prosperity for the family also took place in the house. They were performed around the hearth and usually did not involve particular objects. In some houses, however, there are rooms where cults of divinities, protecting the home, or of heroic ancestors were practiced through sacrifices, offerings and banquets. These practices, as we shall see later in the domestic sanctuaries of El Puntal dels Llops and El Castellet de Bernabé, can be identified by the presence of specific liturgical items and votive offerings ([Figure 27.9](#)). We also find infant burials and animal offerings deposited under floors of houses, which point to domestic rituals, too (Scott [1999](#): 126).

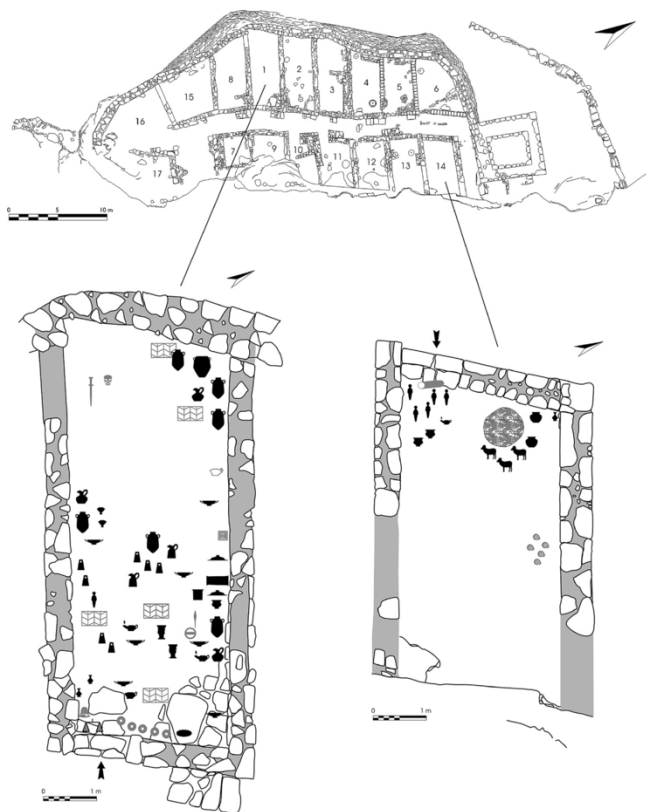


Figure 27.9. Plans of El Puntal dels Llops (Olocau, Valencia).

Another type of room which is found in some houses, both urban and rural, is that for olive mills and wine presses. These contain basins sunken into the ground, platforms for treading and pressing the fruits, and millstones (Figure 27.2). With the exception of commercial settlements such as La Illeta des Banyets (El Campello, Alicante), we have only found one of these facilities per settlement. The houses in which they were found belonged to rich landowners capable of processing the crops of whole vineyards or olive groves and maintaining these facilities (Pérez Jordà *et al.* 2000: 161–62; Mata *et al.* 2009b).

We also have evidence for metallurgical activities in many settlements (Mata *et al.* 2009a). The remains of a forge and

drops of lead, silver and copper in rooms indicate that many families combined agriculture with the production of metal artefacts. In El Puntal dels Llops (Room 2), El Castellet de Bernabé (Rooms 12 and 13), Edeta (Room 118), Kelin (house 2) and La Bastida de les Alcusses (sets 3 and 10), small metallurgical workshops for forging and working bronze and silver were found in minor rooms (Figures 27.5, 27.6, 27.8 and 27.9).

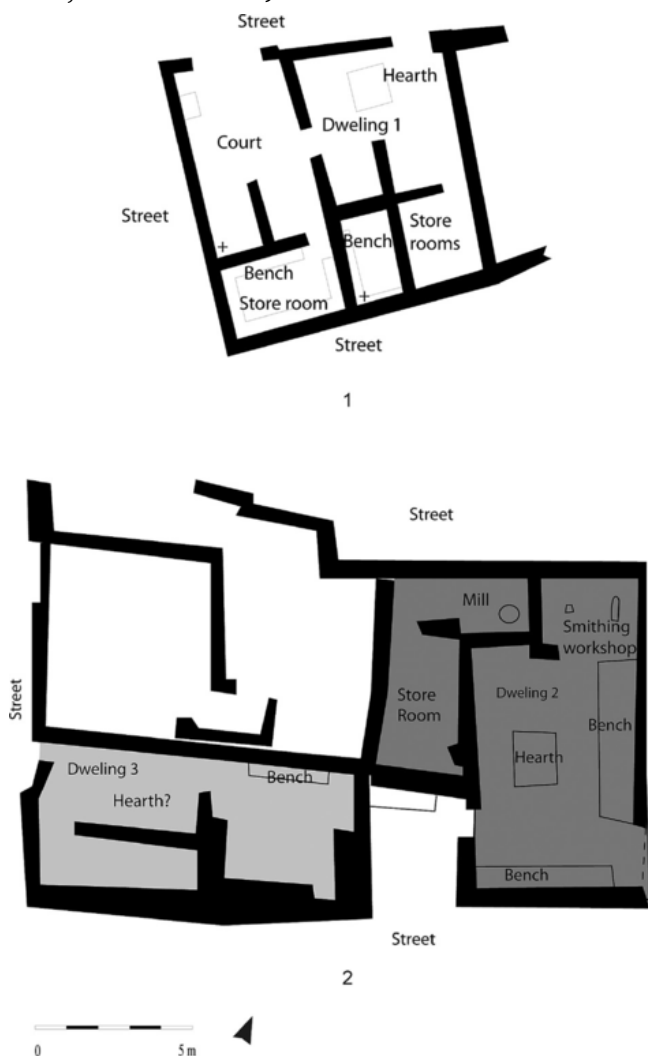


Figure 27.5. House plans from Kelin (Caudete de los Fuentes, Valencia).

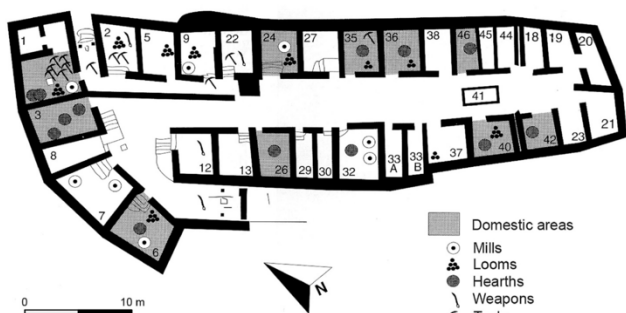
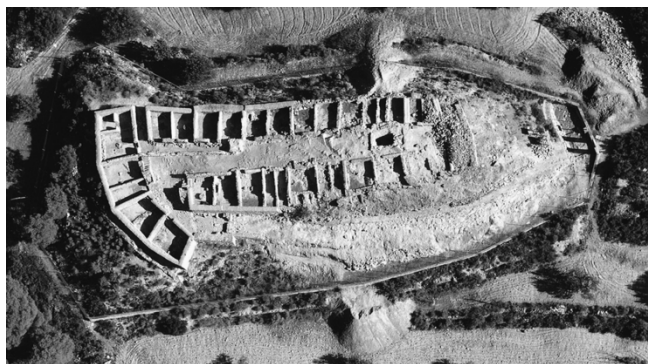


Figure 27.8. Aerial photo and plan of El Castellet de Bernabé (Lliría, Valencia).

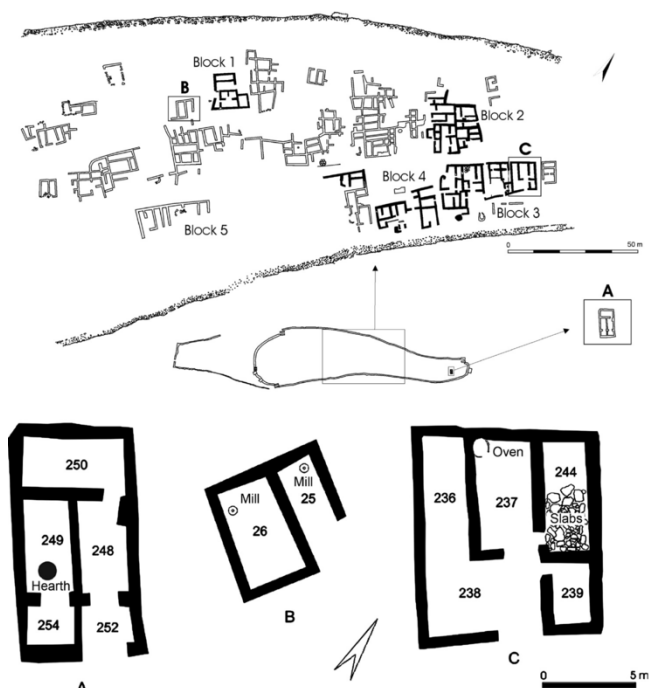


Figure 27.6. House plans from La Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent, Valencia).

Some houses had courtyards or hallways to organise space and to provide privacy to certain rooms by separating them from the street and the rest of the house. The courtyards were also used for a wide variety of activities, as is evident from remains such as hearths, ovens, workbenches, stools and various kinds of refuse. In the courtyard of a house in La Seña, a tank with ash, bits of pottery and remains of sheep, goat, pig, cattle, deer and hare were found (Figure 27.1). The anatomical remains included teeth, bits of horn, metapodia and a small number of hooved extremities from the front and back limbs. These and the nature of the butchering marks – deep cuts made by tools such as an axe – point to the first phase of the butchering process, that is, the quartering of animals (Iborra 2004: 208; Iborra *et al.* 2010: 101–102).

Finally, we have been unable to identify stables, neither through organic remains nor through structures such as

watering holes or feeding troughs, but we have noted some rooms with very irregular floors and no personal possessions at all that could have been used for keeping animals. In La Bastida de les Alcusses in particular, there are several narrow long spaces without any artefacts and that are either separate from the house or, if integrated in it, have their own separate entrances (Figure 27.6) (Díes *et al.* 1997: figs 8 and 9).

The House as the Differentiating Element of Social Structure

Having defined the Iberian house and the spaces that constitute it, we will now look at how the community as a whole was organised in different neighbourhoods, i.e. how urban layout and social organisation were structured into different quarters with residential, artisanal or ritual functions. In order to do so, it is first of all important to distinguish between the various types of settlement. In the Iberian area of Valencia, a settlement hierarchy has been described on the basis of both site size and settlement layout and function (Bernabeu *et al.* 1987; Mata *et al.* 2001; Bonet *et al.* 2008; Mata *et al.* 2009b). Because a range of settlement types have been excavated in the territories of the towns of Edeta and Kelin (Figure 27.1), we have a good overview of both urban and rural dwellings, and we can begin to distinguish more clearly between rural and urban houses, between peasants and craftsmen and even between owners and non-owners.

Town Life

Within the same settlements, we find large houses, with or without courtyards and with one or several floors, alongside simpler ones with just one or two rooms. This implies a clear social hierarchy where the elite stood out from the others. In practically all sites, this inequality can be documented, but it is especially in the large centres where the aristocratic houses are easier to distinguish from the rest.

Some of these houses can be interpreted as elite mansions

on the basis of the larger surface area, more rooms, distinctive architectural features, presence of prestige items and location in a prominent or central area of the settlement. These houses measure between 400 and 150 sq m but exceptionally are as large as 1000 sq m (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 99–101).

Houses of a second type measure between 50 and 150 sq m and vary in typology and equipment. These dwellings are quite widespread across Iberia and are seen as belonging to the middle classes. A third type is made up of even smaller houses, between 20 and 50 sq m, where only a few belongings and equipment have been found. These are therefore regarded as having been occupied by families or individuals with limited resources.

The lack of extensive excavations in cities does not allow us to gain a detailed understanding of town organisation and to see whether specialised quarters existed. In most settlements, the great mansions share blocks with simpler ones, although there are some places, such as El Castellet de Banyoles (Tivissa, Tarragona), where grand aristocratic residences were separated from smaller dwellings by streets (Asensio *et al.* 2002). In addition, there were also so-called peri-urban neighbourhoods dedicated to craft production such as la Illeta dels Banyets (El Campello, Alicante) or el Tossal de les Basses (Alicante; Olcina 1997; Rosser and Fuentes 2007).

The Town of Edeta

Edeta was a town of around 10 ha that is mentioned by Livy (27.17.1) as the seat of the Iberian king Edecon. Situated on a steep hill, it controlled a territory of some 900 sq km between the sixth century BC and the beginning of the second century BC. Between 1932–1953, a residential area with multistorey houses and an urban temple was excavated on the southern slope of the hill, which has been dated to the third and early second century BC (Bonet 1995; Bonet and Mata 1997a).

The houses of Block 7 are particularly well preserved, and

the small finds and equipment found provide precious information about the inhabitants' lives. Block 7 was built against the bedrock of the slope and comprises two adjacent large houses of ca. 150 sq m with two or three floors ([Figure 27.2](#)). House 1 is made up of rooms 41, 42 and 43. Of these, room 41 can be accessed from the street, but it does not communicate with the other rooms. It lacks any structures relating to agricultural or craft production, but it has yielded the most prestigious items of the three rooms, in particular decorated vases and miniature pots. Room 42 has two activity areas with a large mill at street level and a domestic oven in the back area. Room 43 is linked to 42 through an opening of more than 2 m and has a large cooking oven (1.2 m in diameter) with a dome partially made of mud-brick. The presence of two ovens and a mill in these rooms suggests that these were also used by neighbours, who presumably paid back in kind. Both rooms could be accessed directly from the street ([Figure 27.2](#)).

House 2 also has three rooms. Two of them (44 and 46) were connected at the upper level through a door which stood almost 3 m above ground-floor level ([Figure 27.2](#)). The three lower rooms (15, 44 and 46) could be accessed directly from the street. Room 46 had at its centre a large mill (60 cm in diameter) on a circular base, while in 44 an impressive stone staircase led to the upper storeys. The presence of a wine press, a mill and a loom in room 15 and of large decorative storage containers points to multiple uses of this space.

On the upper floor of both houses, we find the storage and sleeping areas, which means that the private spaces were separated from the lower floors where more people would circulate. Six child burials have been found in these two houses: two in house 1 and four in house 2.

The richly decorated vessels show activities that are characteristic of the city's leading group such as hunting scenes, ritual dances, single combat scenes and parades of cavalrymen and infantry, and are therefore likely to have been commissioned as displays of power. Iberian inscriptions have also been found, mostly painted on vases, and provide

further evidence of the high economic and cultural level of the inhabitants of these houses (Bonet 1995: fig. 223). Agriculture was nevertheless important to these house owners, as facilities for processing agricultural produce (presses, mills, ovens) occupy almost half of available spaces. This serves as a healthy reminder that land and the exploitation of natural resources were the basis of the inhabitants' wealth and power (Bonet *et al.* 2008).

The Town of Kelin

Kelin is situated on a low hill on the plateau that connects the Mediterranean coast to the interior uplands of the Iberian peninsula. It was inhabited from the seventh until the first century BC, and by the second century BC, it struck coins with the legend *Kelin*. Like the town of Edeta, it was the capital of a territory of some 2000 sq km. Three houses have been fully excavated and several others partly excavated. All had just one storey and were occupied in the third and early second century BC (Mata 1991; Mata *et al.* 2001).

House 1 measured around 100 sq m and comprised two rectangular rooms linked by an opening in the separation wall (Figure 27.5: 1). The main room included a central hearth and had direct access from the street; at the back were two small storage areas with benches along the walls. It also included a courtyard accessible from the street through a wide entrance suitable for the passage of a cart. At the back was another storage area with storage benches. In this house, two infant burials were found: one under the bench of one of the storage rooms, and another in the corner of the courtyard.

On the highest part of the settlement, a housing block has been excavated that consisted of two houses and two buildings of unknown purpose (Figure 27.5: 2). House 2 was about 80 sq m, although the excavation is incomplete. It was made up of four rooms that included a main room with direct access from the street, which contained a large central hearth and two benches along the walls. Around the hearth and on one of the benches, a large number of artefacts have

been found. This room communicated with a small metal workshop that had an anvil, a forge and a pair of tongs among other iron implements (Mata *et al.* 2009a). Two more rooms were part of the same house but were not directly connected: one was a storage room that held ca. 70 amphorae with a total content of around 5180 L, and the other one contained a mill (60 cm in diameter). This room also had a bench or loading bay on the outside. In all likelihood, the family would have gathered around the hearth for meals and sleeping, as the other rooms of the house contained items and facilities for other activities which would have made other uses of them difficult.

House 3 measured about 50 sq m and was divided into three areas (Figure 27.5: 2). From the street, one could walk directly into a rectangular room where the remains of a central hearth have been found. A pile of loomweights was found near the door. This room communicated with a second one that yielded no notable finds, and a third one with two benches along a wall, some amphora fragments and plenty of tableware. This larger room would have been used for meetings and as a place to sleep.

Bioarchaeological remains provide further evidence to confirm the suggestion that these houses were occupied by two families of very different status and resources. In house 2, all remains were of domesticated animals (ovicapids, cattle and pig), and the parts of the animals which were consumed were those with the highest meat content such as the legs and the ribs of young animals. The vegetable diet was varied and included cereals (wheat, barley and millet), pulses (grass pea) and fruit (vine and fig). In house 3, on the other hand, both domesticated and wild species were present (ovicaprids, cattle, pig, horse, deer and rabbit), but the domestic animal parts consumed were of inferior quality. Among the vegetables, the cereals just included barley and wheat, and there was no evidence of pulses. Otherwise, there were only grapes and olives (Iborra 2004: 217–54; Iborra *et al.* 2010: 109–11). Between the two houses, there were two large structures directly accessible from the street through very wide doors and without internal subdivisions

or the necessary equipment to be considered houses.

We thus see three houses inhabited by peasant families with different sets of resources, while house 2 stands out because of the metallurgical workshop, winery, artefacts and food resources.

The Oppidum of La Bastida de les Alcusses

La Bastida de les Alcusses is a fourth-century fortification of approximately 5 ha, located on a high hill which dominated the *via Heraclea* or Camino de Anibal (Hannibal's way) that led inland from the coast and was later renamed *via Augusta* (Sillières 1977). From the urban layout excavated between 1928–1931, we have been able to identify artisanal and residential areas situated side by side along a central street (Bonet and Vives-Ferrándiz 2011). The housing blocks also include various other types of buildings (Figures 27.6 and 27.7; Díes *et al.* 1997: 231; Bonet *et al.* 2005; Belarte *et al.* 2009: 114–15).



Figure 27.7. Artist's impression of La Bastida de les Alcusses (Moixent, Valencia).

On the higher part of the site, a large building (block 5) stands out that comprised four rooms of ca. 250 sq m (Figure 27.6). It has been interpreted as a place for cult activities (Díes and Álvarez 1997), but it could equally have

been a large house inhabited by the local elite or a public building. The lack of artefacts and domestic equipment does not allow any certain identification, but its central and dominant position on the top of the hill and the heavy walls clearly differentiate it from other houses and spaces.

Block 4, south of a large square, comprises three groups of houses (Figure 27.6), the central one of which is known as the 'Casa del Guerrero' or house of the warrior. It measures around 200 sq m and is divided into eight rooms. In one of these, a small bronze statuette of a horseman was found in 1929. It was probably originally part of a sceptre and thus suggests an occupant of notable rank (Lorrio and Almagro-Gorbea 2004–2005; Belarte *et al.* 2009: 115).

The largest group of domestic buildings consists of houses between 80 and 150 sq m (blocks 1 and 2) that counted four to six rooms each and included basic domestic artefacts such as hearths, mills and looms, as well as storage areas (Figure 27.6). They were domestic structures with or without courtyards, and several show evidence of rebuilding and expansion. Access was direct from the street or through a courtyard or vestibule.

Another no less numerous group of houses measured between 20 and 60 sq m (Figure 27.6). House 11 represents a good example: it was 50 sq m large and consisted of an anteroom and three more rooms: one of which was for storage, one contained a hearth and another one used for textile-related activities, as suggested by artefacts found *in situ* (Díes *et al.* 1997: 236–44). Another example is a much smaller house of only 24 sq m (rooms 25 and 26) but which still had areas dedicated to milling, weaving and metallurgy, while tableware was also found.

Overall, there is thus no standard household, not even among families of the same social rank. There are also sectors, such as block 3, where no mills or hearths have been recorded but where evidence for metallurgical activities was abundant (Figure 27.6). Out of the four buildings which form this block, each measuring between 80 and 120 sq m, three had circular ovens and a large amount of lead and iron

slag, indicating that these buildings were dedicated to metalworking.

The artefacts recovered from all of these houses point to the fact that although agriculture was the fundamental basis for subsistence, there were plenty of other activities. In the same rooms where we find imported pottery and personal and prestige items such as fibulae, buttons, belt buckles, tweezers, bone needles and combs, glass paste necklaces, amulets, silver and earrings, we also have tools and installations for weaving, milling, food preparation, reparation of tools, working the fields and herding. They are the possessions of farmers, iron workers, jewellery makers, artisans and merchants who, like in all hierarchical societies, owned clear symbols of distinction (Bonet and Vives-Ferrándiz 2011).

Rural Life

Settlement in the hinterland of the towns and large *oppida* was made up of fortified sites, such as villages, hamlets, farms and fortlets, and a large number of non-fortified sites of an evidently rural nature such as farms and wineries. There also existed a variety of rural establishments that were non-residential such as farmyards and metal and pottery kilns, but we will not discuss these in this chapter.

Farms and Fortified Hamlets

Settlement in the territory of Edeta consisted primarily of enclosed settlement sites situated on low hills and ridges (Bonet *et al.* 2008). These include, first of all, 12 farms and fortified hamlets, which are settlement sites measuring between 1000 and 2500 sq m, situated near agricultural fields. The best example is Castellet de Bernabé (Figure 27.1), a fortified settlement of about 1000 sq m that has been fully excavated (Guérin 2003).

In its final phase around 200 BC, this site was organised as follows (Figure 27.8). At the northern end stood a large house of approximately 150 sq m that had private access from within and from outside the settlement. Both doors led

to an L-shaped covered corridor from which the five rooms of the house could be entered. The main room (1) had several hearths and areas for milling and weaving; in front of it, there was a small room (2) identified as a domestic sanctuary with a decorated ritual hearth, a burning area with ashes in one corner and a niche with some ritual objects. There was also a milling area with a large mill (5) and a possible storage space (9), which contained a dismantled mill and a loom. Room 22 has been interpreted as an *andron* or men's room because of the many weapons found there. Some of these rooms could have had an upper floor used for sleeping or as a terrace. The artefacts from this house attest to domestic activities such as cooking, milling, storage, weaving and domestic rites, as well as agricultural work, as finds include two pronged spades, hoes and large pruning shears. The weapons found in this house are few (a shield handle, spear and knife), but they are the only ones found in the entire settlement. The house also contained five child burials.

At the other side of the central street and around the square, there was an olive press with two decantation basins (6), a storage facility with inbuilt benches (8), a granary or milling area with two mill stones (7), a room with a hearth (3), a forge with waste spread around a workbench (12) and a metallurgical workshop for working lead (13) that included an oven, a stone anvil and a possible woodshed. All these rooms had an upper floor that could be reached over two stone staircases and which was probably used as living and sleeping quarters. In this sector, five child burials were discovered.

In the southern sector of the site, rooms with central hearths (26, 35, 36, 46, 40 and 42) lined both sides of the central street, alternating with other spaces used for storage (29/30), as a granary (32) and with an oven (24). In this whole area, a single infant burial was found.

The site of Castellet de Bernabé as a whole has been interpreted as a large agricultural enterprise and residence of an aristocratic family who owned the surrounding lands (Figure 27.8). This family lived in the large house and

shared the enclosed space with dependants who occupied the single-room dwellings. These were presumably landless peasants who worked their master's land under ties of dependency. They also did other jobs which were necessary for the proper functioning of the property such as producing olive oil and metalworking. It has been calculated that 40–60 people would have lived at the site at any one time (Guérin 1999; 2003; 2005).

Fortlets

From the fourth century onwards, the territory of Edeta was defined by 16 fortlets on the surrounding mountains. They constituted a network of sites that were in sight of at least one or two others and the capital at Edeta. All fortlets were destroyed and abandoned around the beginning of the second century BC. At El Puntal dels Llops, the walls enclosed an inhabited area of 600 sq m, with a large square tower at the northern end, which dominates the only entrance to the site (Figure 27.9; Bonet and Mata 2002).

El Puntal dels Llops was a large walled settlement with 17 rooms distributed on either side of a central street. Eight stone staircases at the front of these buildings indicate that these had had upper storeys, which added to the available working space. Each of these had different but complementary functions that could be identified because of the numerous artefacts and domestic items preserved *in situ*. There were only four cooking hearths (nos. 1, 2, 7 and 14), and two of these were also used for ritual activities (nos. 1 and 14). There were rooms for milling with mobile rotary querns (2, 6 and 13), and others with large mills fixed on stone bases (4 and 5). Textile production took place throughout the fortlet but especially so in six rooms with loomweights and spindle whorls (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6). An oven, remains of lead smelting, lead sheets and a litharge cake (2 and 5) document the first phase of silver cupellation. In three storage and cooking spaces (2, 3 and 4), we find large jars, amphorae, beehives, tableware and cooking pots, while rooms 9, 10, 11 and 12 were sleeping areas or areas which did not serve any specific purpose.

Out of all the rooms of the fortlet, three must be noted in particular. Room 4, which had an upper storey, would have been the living quarters of the knight and leader of the fortlet: as well as having almost all artefacts and equipment to be expected in a household – mill, storage, loom – it included a notable concentration of prestige items such as coins and iron ingots, as well as horse gear such as weapons, spurs, halters and tweezers as well as small bells for the horses. The other two rooms were used for domestic cults (Figure 27.9): room 1 stands out because of the liturgical artefacts found, which include two incense burners shaped like a Demeter/Tanit head, miniature vessels, lamps, *guttus*-shaped pitchers, libation jars, a bronze spit and fragments of small terracotta statues, in addition to Attic and Italic Black Gloss ware and complete set of weights with weighing dishes. It also contains a flagstone hearth in one corner and the only infant burial of the whole site. The rituals performed would have been dedicated to a goddess associated with the image of Demeter or Tanit, i.e. agrarian and fertility cults. The rooms would also have served as meeting places for the leading group. In Room 14, next to a round hearth, two cooking pots and the remains of two rabbits and two pigs have been found, which we interpret as a ritual meal. Next to the door, nine ceramic male and female heads with distinct features might have represented heroic ancestors, who were perhaps also the object of cult activities (Bonet and Mata 1997a: 134–37).

The inhabitants of El Puntal dels Llops may have been related to each other by kinship and have formed an extended family; they may also have been connected by patronage. The aristocratic horsemen would have controlled an important communication route and were well placed to exploit the forest and mineral wealth of the area. The approximate number of inhabitants would have been around 25 people (Bonet and Mata 2002: table 19).

Rural Houses

Rural houses were small single buildings, although they could have additional structures for working and keeping

tools or livestock. They basically served as either permanent or temporary peasant housing.

In the territory of Edeta, only one such house has been fully excavated, at La Fonteta Ràquia (Riba-Roja de Túria, Valencia). It is dated to the third century BC and specialised in apiculture (Jardón *et al.* 2009). It is situated on the plain and measured about 130 sq m. It comprised four rooms and a large open courtyard, possibly with a porch. In a fifth room, a lime-plastered pit and a hearth have been preserved. Around 50 cylindrical ceramic beehives have been found close to the northwest wall of the courtyard, under the possible porch. We have evidence for apiculture in the territory of Edeta since the third century BC from all types of sites in the region, which suggests that honey was not only consumed but also traded (Bonet and Mata 1997b; Bonet *et al.* 2008).

The territory of Kelin was, by contrast, defined by a much more dispersed settlement pattern (Mata *et al.* 2001; Mata *et al.* 2009b; Pérez Jordà *et al.* 2013). Three of these small rural sites in this area have been excavated.

La Rambla de la Alcantarilla is a single building of approximately 150 sq m that was occupied between the fifth and third centuries BC (Figure 27.10: 1). It had four rooms, a possible porch to the north and a courtyard. In one of these, traces of burning have been found, and another one included an olive mill. At approximately 30 m from the building, a stone press was found. Three more presses and an olive mill, all made of stone, and a small shed stand a little bit farther away (Pérez Jordà 2000; Mata *et al.* 2009b).

The finds indicate that wine and olive oil were produced here, with people occupying the site at least seasonally from September until December. The absence of grinding stones, loomweights, spindles, personal artefacts and tools suggests that the building was not permanently occupied. In all other aspects such as size and spatial organisation, it resembles an urban house. It lacks the characteristics of a fortlet because the settlement is isolated and not built in sight of another rural settlement; fortlets were moreover permanently

inhabited. The people involved in the agricultural activities presumably were part of a nearby community or family, perhaps the site at Solana de Cantos 1, which is only 700 m away, or Casa de Alcantarilla at just over 2 km.

A similar form of organisation was found at La Rambla de Los Morenos, where there are four stone presses, a nearby settlement and wheel tracks connecting the two sites (Mata *et al.* 2009b).

El Zoquete (Requena, Valencia) is another rural house of around 300 sq m that included six rooms, a porch, a patio and an outer open space. It was abandoned at the end of the third century BC (Figure 27.10: 2). In the largest room, there was a central hearth and a corner bench. Other features worth mentioning are an oven, a storage room, a reused rotary quern, slag from a forge, a nozzle, a silver Punic coin and various types of pottery. All this indicates that this was a permanent residence of a peasant household, who worked the surrounding land and worked their own metal for domestic and maintenance purposes (Pérez Jordà *et al.* 2007; Quixal *et al.* 2008).

Conclusions: Households, Gender and Inequality

This chapter demonstrates the heterogeneous organisation of Iberian houses. The core of the house is the hearth, which tends to be in the largest room that served as a meeting space. Around the hearth, various daily activities took place that ensured its physical and social upkeep. These activities could have shared spaces or taken place in different rooms depending on the complexity of the house and therefore on the social status of its inhabitants. The privacy of these spaces was also restricted to the higher classes. Although what we have shown here is a fixed image, almost all the houses reveal modifications due to changes in the family's life cycle.

Besides the organisation and use of spaces, the themes of

gender and family organisation are of interest for understanding these houses. The identification of spaces by gender is not an easy task, especially in smaller houses where a range of tasks took place in one or two rooms. However, those tasks, universally associated with women, are well documented in all houses, and we have good evidence for spinning and weaving, food preparation and cooking, the organisation of domestic life through the control of the storage rooms or domestic rituals. Other female roles such as the upkeep and cleaning of the house, motherhood, education and care of children and of sick and elderly people, and preparation of the deceased barely leave traces in the archaeological record. Similarly, it is difficult to identify rooms used by men. Hunting gear and weapons had no functional use within the house and could thus be kept in any part of the house. Only a few pieces of equipment or tools could indicate male working spaces, such as metallurgical kilns or carpenters' tools.

Despite concerted efforts to identify female and male spaces in the Iberian world (Llobregat 1972; Guérin 2003; 2005), spaces which are equally unclear in the Greek world (Nevett 2005: 95), the results are not very encouraging. Even in rooms where artefacts and equipment such as armour, iron ingots, coins and agricultural tools could point to a male environment, as for instance in room 4 of El Puntal dels Llops (Bonet and Mata 2002: 55–68), the rest of the equipment and pottery includes mills, storage and cooking wares that can be related to female activities, and all in all the evidence suggests a shared space. The archaeological record thus shows an Iberian house with spaces used by both genders but where women were on balance better represented and played an essential role in the transmission of tradition and ideology.

Gender archaeology proposes new questions about work organisation. Could women, as well as men, have worked in the metal workshops and with large installations such as ovens, kilns, mills, presses and olive mills as found in the houses (Ortega 1999: 109; Sánchez and Moreno 2005)? For instance, in room 2 of El Puntal dels Llops (Figure 27.9),

female activities such as cooking, weaving, milling and keeping the pantry took place at the same time as activities associated with men such as silver cupellation (Bonet and Mata 2002: 42–51). In this case, women could have taken part in the cupellation process, although we could also be looking at shared use of space. The administration of the domestic economy could have been in the hands of women, as can be seen in rooms 48 of La Bastida de les Alcusses, 1 of El Puntal dels Llops and perhaps 32 at El Castellet. At La Bastida and El Castellet, a mill is associated with an inscription on lead (Figure 27.3), while at El Puntal there is a set of weights and measures next to an essentially female set of artefacts. Written sources such as the passage of Justin quoted above also encourage us to widen our traditional views about the role of Iberian woman.

As far as family organisation is concerned, our starting point is provided by the archaeological record that clearly shows that the Iberian family is nuclear, neolocal and free, if not wholly independent. A good example is provided by the fortified farm of El Castellet de Bernabé (Figure 27.8). At least in the final phases, the house of the land-holding family is separated from the other domestic units, and they only share communal services (Guérin 2003). Something similar may be the case at El Oral (San Fulgencio, Alicante), where the small houses surrounding the large mansions would have been inhabited by families dependent on them (Abad and Sala 2001: 266). Other cases would have been the large families who shared the large houses at La Bastida de les Alcusses with clients and servants, or the farms such as El Zoquete (Figures 27.6 and 27.10).

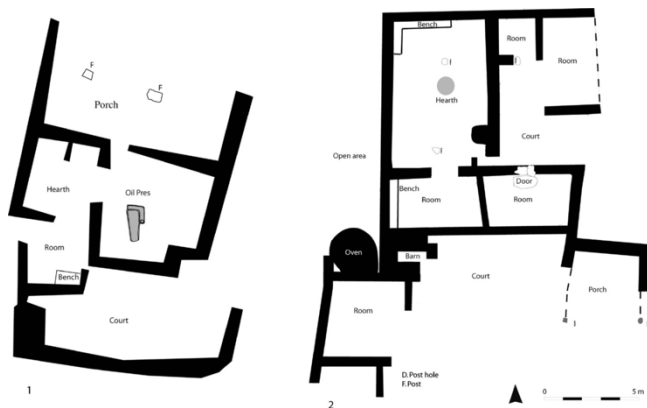


Figure 27.10. Plans of Rambla de la Alcantarilla and El Zoquete (Requena, Valencia).

The fortlets reveal a special organisation. In El Puntal dels Llops (Figure 27.9), there were no changes in the use of space throughout its existence of more than two centuries. Only four hearths have been found, and it has been calculated that approximately 25 people lived there. All of these were probably linked by ties of clientship as well as kinship, as there is no clearly separated space as there is in El Castellet de Bernabé, and all activities were shared (Bonet and Mata 2002: 222).

It seems clear that the archaeological record shows social differentiation much more clearly than gender differentiation. It is for instance likely that the owners (male or female) of the great houses of Kelin, Edeta, El Castellet de Bernabé or La Bastida de les Alcusses with their specialised facilities would have relied on dependent workers or slaves to undertake the metalworking, production of wine and olive oil, milling or cooking.

Finally, we come to the connections between production and the Iberian household. Access to land was less of a problem for families or households than investing human and material resources in agricultural products with delayed benefits such as arboriculture. The basis of agricultural work was the labour provided by the family, but differences were created by the quality of the land owned, options for

complementing income by exploiting or processing agricultural goods (olive mills, presses, ovens, mills) or with craft activities such as mining, trade, metalworking and pottery production and, of course, the circumstances inherent in the life cycle of each family (Gallant 1991). Some families must have worked for others or used processing equipment of other people, which may have led to relations of dependence and even loss of land, thus contributing to the creation and maintenance of a social hierarchy.

Land was a source of subsistence, but also of wealth and power (Bonet *et al.* 2008). All of this, including the varying sizes and organisation of houses, points to the existence of minor and major landowners as well as families who did not own any land or other goods at all, even if there are few traces of their hardship in the archaeological record.

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28 Landscapes and Seascapes of Southwest Iberia in the First Millennium BC

Alonso Rodríguez Díaz

Abstract

The western end of the Mediterranean has all the elements of a true crossroads between the south of the Iberian Peninsula and north Africa, with the Strait of Gibraltar the only exit to the Atlantic. In sum, it makes up a real junction between north and south as well as east and west; it has long been and continues to be a focal point of encounters and conflict between human groups. During the first millennium BC, the geography of southwest Iberia, its coasts and internal territories were the set for a complex historical process that involved indigenous populations, Phoenicians, Greeks and Carthaginians that resulted in the ethno-cultural mosaic about which Greek and Roman authors have reported. The main focus of this chapter is on connection routes, forms of contacts and interaction between landscapes and human groups and the different levels of socio-economic and politico-ideological complexity that developed over time.

Introduction: Geography and Historical Complexity

The southwest corner of the Iberian Peninsula is defined by the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, while the interior is made up of different but connected territories. The southern

Mediterranean coast runs almost parallel to the north African one until it reaches Málaga, where, near Tarifa, a curved stretch begins that together with the shore of Ceuta-Tangier outlines the gulf of Gibraltar. The Atlantic coast includes the arcs of the Gulf of Cádiz and the Portuguese Algarve. At Cabo de San Vicente, the coast turns almost at a right angle and continues at a slight curve until the peninsula of Lisbon. Further north, the so-called Costa de Prata also continues in a concave stretch until Figueira da Foz and Aveiro. The territories of the interior, for their part, are structured around the hydrographical basins of the Tagus, Guadiana and Guadalquivir, and are framed by the fractured slopes of the Sistema Central, Montes de Toledo-Sierra de San Pedro, Sierra Morena and Sistema Baetico. These rivers spring in the eastern third of the peninsula and, after long partially navigable stretches, flow into the Atlantic. The Guadalquivir flows through an ample and fertile valley, irrigated by a veritable hydrographic web. In its regional configuration, we find the fields of Seville and Cordoba, the surroundings of their paleo-estuary, and to the west, the plains of Huelva. Among its mountainous landscapes, we might highlight those of Ronda (Málaga) and the north of Huelva, the latter shared with the Guadiana and which has a vast mining potential, as it is part of the western Iberian Pyrite Belt of the Sierra Morena (Blanco and Rothenberg 1981).

The Spanish basin of the western Guadiana includes the provinces of Ciudad Real and Badajoz, characterised by an open agrarian landscape (Tierra de Barros), with some areas of known mining and metallurgical significance (Almadén). To the west lies the Portuguese Alentejo that is mainly agricultural in nature and defined for the most part by the Sado River. The western stretch of the River Tagus finally flows through the Spanish provinces of Toledo and Cáceres and the Portuguese Beira Baja, with the last two especially well known for their livestock and forestry resources and its potential for mining of lead and gold besides other metals (Florida 1987). Communication between these areas is guaranteed by the partial navigability of the rivers, the many fords that cross those and the passes over the main

mountain ranges (Figure 28.1).

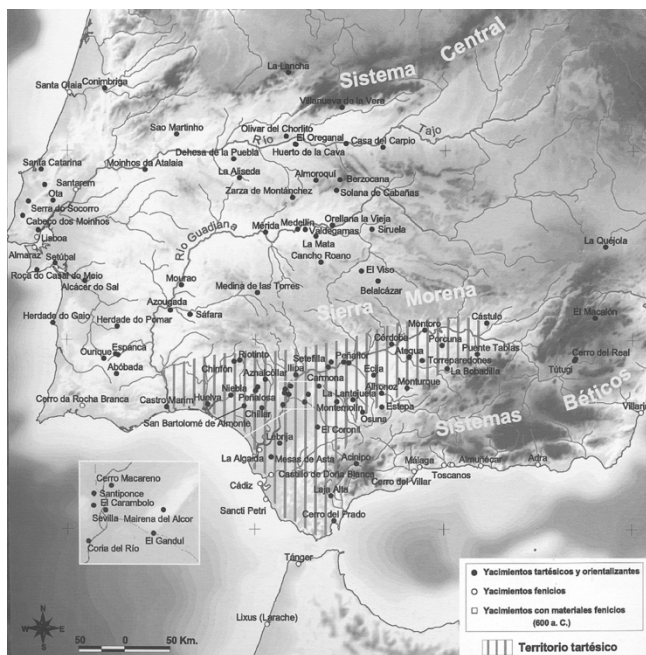


Figure 28.1. Overview map of Phoenician and Tartessian settlement in southwest Iberia (Aranegui 2000: 19–20).

From the beginning of the first millennium BC, the spatial and sociopolitical organisation of these coasts and territories, diverse in their geographies and potentialities, and integrated in the earlier commercial circuits associated with Gadir, Tartessos and the so-called ‘*Círculo del Estrecho*’ or ‘Circuit’ of the Strait of Gibraltar (Escacena 1985; Álvarez 2005; Tarradel 1960; Niveau de Villedary 2001). As the available archaeological information for these areas has increased in the past few years, intense debates have explored how the ‘centres and peripheries’ of this network were connected and energy flows and communication of the system changed. All these problems directly concern other questions of Mediterranean protohistory such as the continuities and discontinuities between the Late Bronze and the Iron Ages, the identity and groupings of demographic flows, contacts between unequal societies, city and countryside, the economic and commercial bases, the role of

ideology, social complexity, and so on.

The main objective of this chapter is to offer a synthesis of protohistoric southwest Iberia through the better-known areas and periods. I will begin with the Tyrian foundation of Gadir, as this town would later become the centre of an extensive network of inter-regional relations, articulated around primary centres (Huelva, lower Guadalquivir) as well as coastal (Atlantic and Mediterranean) and interior peripheries (south-central Portugal, Extremadura, southern Meseta, mid to upper Guadalquivir). This network of centre–periphery and periphery–periphery relations attained a first phase of prosperity between the ninth/eighth to sixth centuries BC that was marked by the arrival of oriental peoples and by the rise to power of Tartessos, linked to the figure of Arganthonios. After the inevitable readjustments following the sixth-century crisis, the system regained prosperity from the fifth/fourth centuries BC onwards in the context of the growing Carthaginian hegemony, as is especially visible in the centres and coastal peripheries of the ‘Circuit of the Straits’. In the interior, the impact was rather more uneven, however, and a range of different settlement patterns developed, some of which would remain in existence until the Roman occupation.

Phoenicians and Local Inhabitants in Coastal Southwest Iberia

Supported by and with the authority of the palace and temple at Tyre, the foundation of Gadir and of the sanctuary of Melqart (or vice versa) probably took place sometime around the ninth and eighth centuries BC according to archaeological evidence – or much earlier if we accept the ancient written sources. Putting aside this well-known and long debate, which now also includes calibrated absolute chronologies (Torres 1998; Arruda 2005), it is generally assumed that this settlement was founded within the context of an institutionalised project of commercial expansion. It allegedly still took up to three expeditions (Strabo 3.5.5), which reflects the problems of choosing a suitable site on a

coast where currents and winds make sailing difficult. For the Tyrian leaders, these risks were probably worth taking against the benefits of trading with an area which was well known to be rich in silver, gold and copper (Aubet 2009). Gadir was built on a string of small islands facing the Guadalete estuary. The two main islands were called Erytheia and Kotonoussa (Gavala 1992; Arteaga *et al.* 2008) and faced the coast where the site of el Castillo de Doña Blanca was soon to emerge as the main port. The resulting multicentred settlement strongly resembles contexts well known in the eastern Mediterranean (Ruiz Mata and Pérez 1995; Ruiz Mata 1999). Gadir was also connected to Huelva (Onuba), where the silver from the Riotinto area arrived, while also offering, with the Guadalquivir estuary, access to the agricultural, mineral and metallurgical resources of the valley and hills in the interior (Figure 28.2).

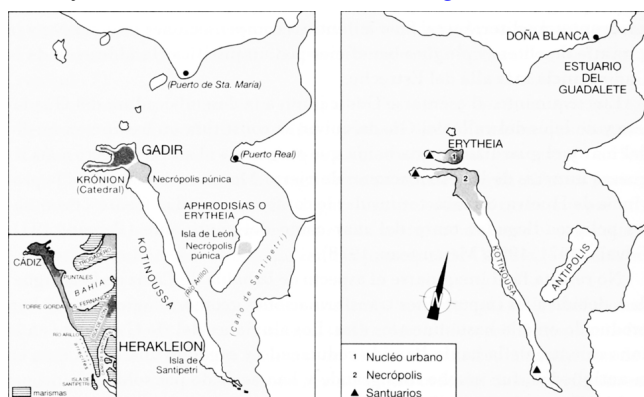


Figure 28.2. Reconstructed paleogeography of the Bay of Cádiz, showing the location of ancient Gadir (Aubet 2009: 272).

Having long been involved in the Atlantic-Mediterranean trade (Ruiz-Gálvez 1995), Huelva (Onuba) was built on the hilltops of an ancient peninsula, flanked by the rivers Tinto and Odiel, and facing the island of Saltes (Fernández Jurado 1988–89: 89). The lower parts of the site already included a pre-colonial trading post as early as the ninth century BC, that was involved in metal, including silver, exchanges, as is shown by finds at the site of ‘Las Monjas-Méndez Núñez’

(González de Canales *et al.* 2004). Three successive buildings occupied the same site between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC that are interpreted as sanctuaries to sanction transactions between local inhabitants and Phoenicians as well as, from a later date, Phocaeans (Cabrera 1988–89; Osuna *et al.* 2001; Belén 2007: 164). At the nearby site of Calle Puerto, different types of buildings and metallurgical structures have been found that attest to mineral extraction and cupellation to obtain silver. The higher parts of the area include the cemetery of La Joya (Garrido and Orta 1989), where burials and prestigious grave goods show that local elites were intensively involved in the oriental and silver trade (Figure 28.3a).

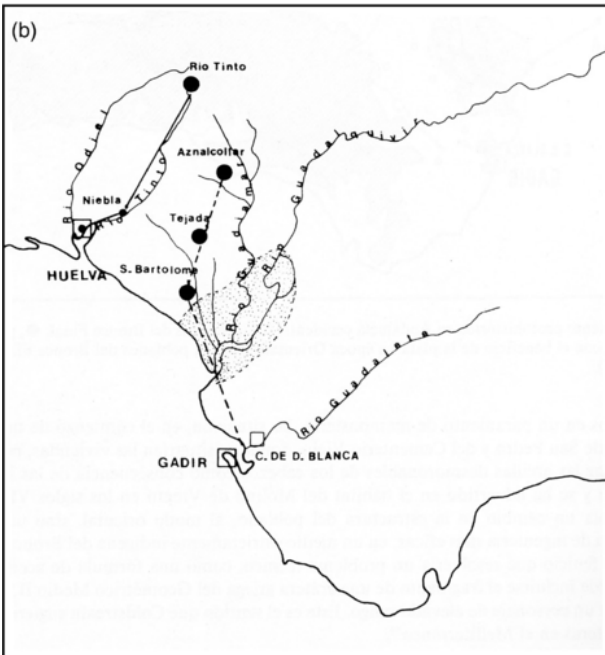
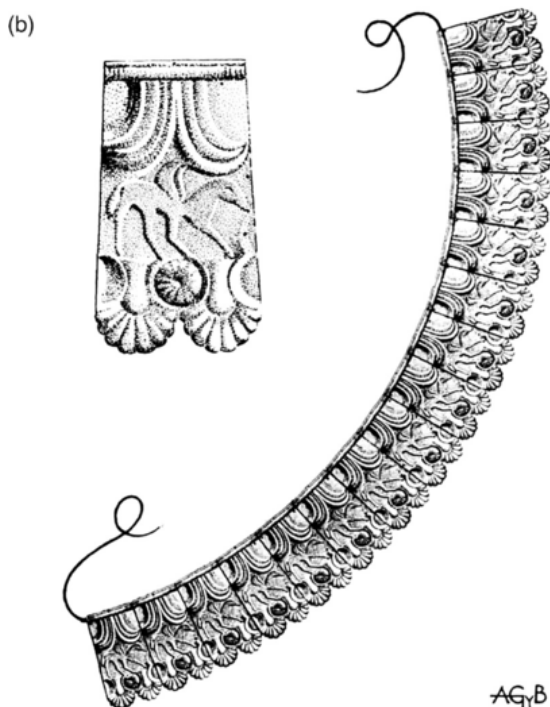
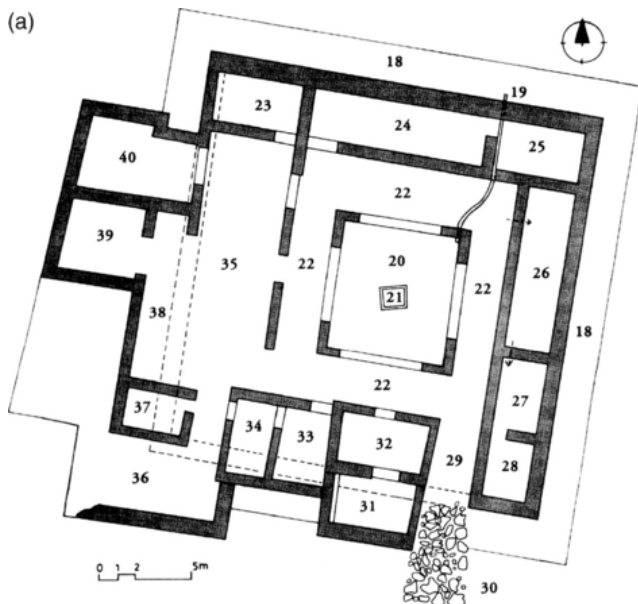


Figure 28.3. (a) Decorative element of a wagon from Tomb 17 of the monumental cemetery of La Joya (Huelva;

Aranegui 2000: 289). (Map of communication routes between the silver mines and the coast between Huelva and Gadir (Ruiz Mata 1989: 242).



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Figure 28.4. (a) Plan of the Phoenician trading post and sanctuary of Abul in its second phase as reported by Mayet

and Tavares (Arruda 2000: 172). (Two items from the Gaio hoard in Sines (drawing by A. García y Bellido; Aubet 2009: 300).

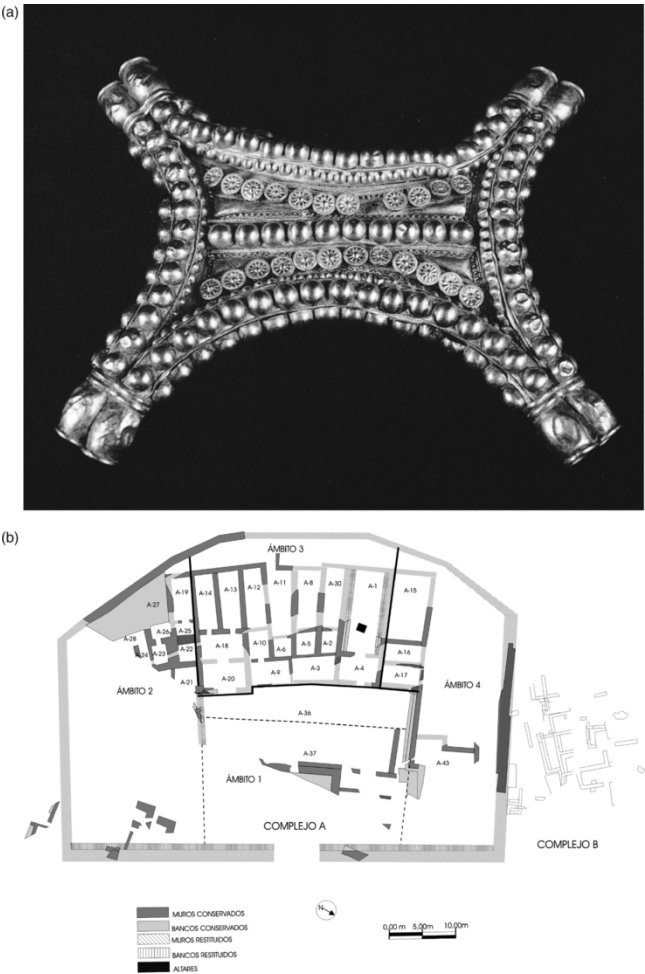


Figure 28.5. (a) Miniature oxhide ingot from the El Carambolo hoard (Aranegui 2000: 251). (Plan of the El Carambolo sanctuary after the 2002–2005 excavations (Fernández Flores and Rodríguez 2010: 224).

From very early on, Onuba controlled the exploitation of silver in the eastern Pyrite Belt of the Sierra Morena, and it is in this area that specialised settlements such as Cerro

Salomón and Niebla were established that worked to their full capacity until the seventh to sixth centuries BC. Mining and metallurgical activities in the Riotinto area during the Tartessian period produced an estimated four million tons of slag (Fernández Jurado and Ruiz Mata 1985: 24). Gadir-Doña Blanca was probably the destination of a second silver route that went to the coast from places such as Aznalcóllar, the fortification of Tejada la Vieja and the metallurgical towns of Peñalosa and San Bartolomé de Almonte. Slag, lead and litharge (lead oxide) at Doña Blanca confirm this (Ruiz Mata 1989; 1999; Fernández Jurado 1995). A possible alternative route is via the Guadiamar River and now silted up bay of Guadalquivir (Izquierdo and Fernandez 2005: 717) (Figure 28.3b).

The gulf of Tartessos was an extensive salt-water estuary (Arteaga *et al.* 1995) which was navigable until Seville and which would even allow sailing up part of the Guadalquivir. This route facilitated the rapid arrival of Phoenician goods in interior centres such as Carmona and Setefilla, presumably in exchange for products of the mines in the foothills of the Sierra Morena and the agricultural valleys. The exchange of amphorae carrying wine and olive oil, jewellery, ivory and other manufactured goods against salt, pelts and maybe slaves denotes unequal exchange and was therefore markedly colonial in character. Of particular interest are the prestige goods, used to seal alliances or agreements with indigenous elites who controlled the resources and access routes. The ritual bronzes, jewels, ivories, broaches and so on found among the grave goods in the cemeteries of Setefilla and Carmona in the lower Guadalquivir valley, of Cástulo in upper Andalucía and even of a place as far away as Aliseda in Extremadura likely reflect such relationships and socio-economic interaction between Phoenicians and Tartessians (Aubert 2009: 291–95). From this perspective, the sociocultural consequences primarily concerned indigenous leaders who constituted princely aristocracies leading more complex and hierarchical political organisations.

Between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC, the commercial activities of Gadir intensified and diversified in response to Phoenician demand for raw materials, especially tin, and agricultural products. It is against this background that Tarradell (1960: 61) coined the label of the '*Círculo del Estrecho*' to describe the Gaditanian and Phoenician presence on the Atlantic coasts of Portugal and northwest Spain, as well as their expansion along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Morocco with places such as Septem, Rusaddir, Rachgoun and Lixus and Mogador. The southern Atlantic expansion in particular allowed the Phoenicians to access the wider region's wealth of fishing, copper, iron and lead from the foothills of the Atlas mountains, as well as the gold, the ivory and salt mines of the Sarah and Banassa (Aranegui 2001; Habibi and Aranegui 2005; López Pardo and Mederos 2008; Aubet 2009: 301–306). The route up the Atlantic coast of the Iberian Peninsula seems, on the other hand, to relate as much to tin from the mythical Cassiterides as to a wide variety of other resources, including tin and gold from the Beiras, copper from the Alentejo, salt and other coastal resources from places such as Santa Olaia, Conimbriga, Quinta do Almaraz, Lisbon, Santarem, Abul, Setúbal, Alcácer do Sal, Tavira and Castro Marim that were all strategically positioned in the estuaries or along the lower reaches of the rivers Mondego, Talo, Sado, Gilão and Guadiana. Within this panorama, the Tajo, Mondego and Sado estuaries stand out as the key colonial sites (Arruda 2002; 2005: 294): on the Sado, for instance, the site of Abul consists of an isolated building with two construction phases of the seventh and sixth centuries BC. It has been interpreted as a Phoenician factory-cum-sanctuary situated close to the indigenous settlements of Setubal and Alcacer do Sal (Mayet and Tavares 2000) (Figure 28.4a). This commercial outpost from Gadir evidently played a key role in the distribution of the luxury objects that found their way to the cemeteries of Alcacer do Sal, Fonte Velha, Almogrebe and, above all, Gaio and Torre Vedras, and that also serve to illustrate the sociopolitical and cultural transformations of the indigenous elites of southern central Portugal (Aubet 2009: 298–99) (Figure 28.4b).

The southern coast of the Iberian Peninsula deserves special mention. While recent geoarchaeological studies have reconstructed the paleogeography of the coast, archaeological work has documented a remarkable concentration of Phoenician settlements, organised in urban centres and smaller factories, usually situated on small islands or coastal promontories with excellent control over the estuaries of the main rivers in the provinces of Cádiz, Málaga, Granada and Almería. The narrow river valleys of the Guardiaro, Guadalhorce, Vélez, Alagiarrobo, Adra, Almanzora and so on thus served to connect the inland districts of Ronda, Antequera or Vega de Granada, where the indigenous populations controlled the resources of the interior. The density of Phoenician settlement is not easy to explain, while their relationships with Gadir is not entirely clear either. It is evident, however, that these colonial enclaves together controlled the coast and access routes towards the interior. Morro de Mezquitilla is considered the oldest foundation around the beginning of the eighth century BC. The other settlements (Toscanos, Chorreras, Cerro del Villar, Montilla, Almuñécar and Abdera) were established at various points between 800–700 BC; some of these sites include architectural evidence that suggests the presence of people of elevated social rank. We can even recognise that a third generation of factories such as Cerro del Prado and Cabecico Parra may be related to older sites. Aubet (2009: 307–19) has thus labelled this area as a ‘Phoenician coast’ between Gibraltar and Alicante, where colonisation took place between the ninth/eighth and seventh centuries BC.

Although the nature, scale and protagonists of the economic activities of this network of settlements are still under discussion, we can say that they drew on the profits from a range of maritime and agricultural resources, with the latter in particular yielding a surplus of cereal, wine and oil for commercial purposes. As for those involved in these activities, the exploitation of agricultural resources and timber at Cerro del Villar has been attributed to indigenous inhabitants of the interior, where deforestation and soil degradation were the eventual results. In other words, it is

argued that the colonial inhabitants of Cerro del Villar were mainly involved in manufacturing, fishing and commercial exchanges and that they obtained their essential supplies through agreements with indigenous elites, who provided agricultural produce from the mid and upper valley of the Gaudalhorce (Aubert and Delgado 2003). This theory contrasts sharply with the view that the Phoenicians were directly involved in agricultural production (González-Wagner and Alvar 1989).

The role of land and agriculture continues to be a controversial theme. The introduction of new crops such as vines and olives and of new agricultural technologies presumably had a notable impact on agricultural production. This includes livestock breeding, as chicken and donkeys were added to the traditional range of cattle, sheep and goats, and pigs. Fishing and salting were entirely new industries that remained in Phoenician hands from the beginning.

A recurrent feature of the Phoenician settlements is nevertheless the management of surpluses, for which various facilities existed. Two good examples are the so-called market street at Cerro del Villar and the 'warehouse' building that was constructed around 700 BC in Toscanos, and that represents a kind of fish market or commercial centre as known from Motya or Al Mina (Aubert 2000; 2009: 319–28). All of this reflects a varied and well-organised commercial context, probably run by an elite or commercial oligarchy, whose traces we find in the burials and grave goods in Toscanos, Trayamar, Almuñecar and Lagos. While the colonial community undoubtedly included other people such as merchants, potters, architects, metallurgists and even an indigenous workforce, the small size of the Archaic cemeteries and the small number of burials recorded suggest a relatively limited number of colonial settlers (Aubert 2009: 329). It has therefore been argued that strategic resources remained in indigenous hands and that treaties and gift exchange, possibly under divine protection, perhaps of the temple of Melqart, constituted the principal mechanism of

interaction between Phoenicians and Tartessians (Aubet 2009: 330–31). These relationships thus stimulated economic intensification in the indigenous communities, as observed at the inland site of Acinipo, in the mountainous area of Ronda (Aguayo *et al.* 1991). Even so, Aubet accepts that the least known aspects of the colonial encounter are precisely the mechanisms of interaction, integration, resistance and the ensuing socio-economic transformations. All these aspects call for interdisciplinary investigation that takes into account both indigenous and colonial perspectives (Aubet 2009: 331).

Peoples of the Interior: West Andalusia, South-Central Portugal and Extremadura

One of the most debated questions in southern Iberian archaeology concerns the migration or otherwise of oriental settlers into the interior of southwest Iberia. The debate mostly focuses on the Tartessian centres of the lower Guadalquivir but southern and central Portugal and parts of Extremadura are sometimes also drawn into the dispute. For the lower Guadalquivir, probably the most radical of theories was put forward in the late 1980s by González-Wagner and Alvar (1989), who suggested that Phoenician settlers occupied Tartessian land to produce their own food. Even if this proposal was fiercely debated and recently qualified by its own authors (González-Wagner and Alvar 2003), it crucially alerted scholars to the importance of agriculture within the wider context of colonial trade and drew attention to the problem of territorial organisation in the Orientalising period in Iberia. In the wake of these ideas, others have also posited the presence of craftsmen and traders in indigenous centres, as the technological, cultural and socio-economic transformations that define the Tartessian Orientalising period remain poorly understood (Bendala 1994; Belén and Escacena 1995; Botto 2002).

Closely related is Belén and Escacena's (1995) suggestion that Phoenician trade with Tartessos was based on a

network of sanctuaries linked to the temple of Melqart in Gadir, and that this system would have involved places such as Coria del Río and El Carambolo, Carmona, Montemolín and, further inland, Cástulo. While some authors consider these sites as palaces or urban residences (Torres 2002: 349; Domínguez 2007: 296), the so-called sanctuary at Cerro de San Juan de Coria del Río is evidently a ritual site. It consists of five superimposed buildings dating between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC. The best known one of these (sanctuary III) dates to the seventh century BC and includes a coloured oxhide-shaped altar. It has been suggested that it was dedicated to Baal Saphon (Escacena and Izquierdo 2001). Finds from earlier and recent excavations at el Carambolo, where, in 1958, the famous treasure was found (de Mata Carriazo 1973) (Figure 28.5a), now show that it represents a major ritual complex with various construction phases between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC. The site has yielded a number of remarkable and even unique structures and objects such as altars, red, shell or stone pavements, steps, stone vessels and small clay baetyli that have prompted interpretations as a sanctuary dedicated to Baal, but a bronze votive offering with a Phoenician inscription and depiction of Astarte sitting down semi-naked suggests that it was more likely dedicated to the latter goddess (Belén and Escacena 1997; Fernández Flores and Rodríguez 2010) (Figure 28.5b)

As far as the other sanctuary sites are concerned, the one in Carmona was of a simpler layout, but it also went through a series of building phases between the eighth and fifth centuries BC. The earliest building has yielded four ivory spoons that represent the legs of a hoofed four-footer as well as three storage containers that were decorated with animal and floral motifs that are iconographically linked to Astarte (Belén *et al.* 1997). In Montemolín, various detached buildings have been discovered that were in use between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC and are interpreted as of a ritual nature. They were built on a hill that offers wide visibility and a strategic position overlooking the Corbones River (De la Bandera *et al.* 1995). The so-called sanctuary at Cástulo, finally, is situated in the mining district of the

Sierra Morena outside the walls of the indigenous *oppidum*, on the banks of the Guadalimar River (Blázquez 1991). The 'ritual-commercial' network made up by these sites may thus be assumed to have been active between the eighth and the sixth centuries BC and to have played a key role in contacts and exchanges between Phoenicians and Tartessians. It has moreover been argued that 'colonial districts' existed around these ritual and commercial centres and that they facilitated intermarriage and cohabitation between Tartessians and Phoenicians, which in turn resulted in culture change and influences.

Our understanding of Tartessian territorial organisation in the Orientalising period remains limited, but it is clear that there was a hierarchical settlement structure (Belén 2000; Izquierdo and Fernández 2005). At the core of the settlement system stood fortified urban centres or *oppida* that had developed out of Bronze Age villages. While the layout and organisation of most are not well known, there is some evidence that oval huts were replaced by more or less complex rectilinear houses that were probably regularly distributed. They have generally been interpreted as seats of aristocracies or sacred monarchies, and examples include Lebrija, Cerro Macareno, Seville, Alcalá del Río, Setefilla, El Gandul, Carmona, Montemolín-Vico, Écija, Osuna, Estapa, Córdoba, Montoro, Torrepadrones and Ategua. The land around some of these 'central places' was first occupied for agrarian purposes between the seventh and the sixth centuries BC. Lack of excavation in these early rural centres limits our knowledge to just one site at La Calañas de Marmolejo, in the western countryside of Jaén (Molinos *et al.* 1994). This site was a rural hamlet made up of a range of functionally distinct spaces used for storage and domestic and productive activities, including manufacturing of so-called grey ware pottery, and separated by open spaces. In the absence of environmental data, there is little that can be said about crops, land divisions, agrarian technologies, livestock and so on (Escacena 2007; Ferrer *et al.* 2007).

Overall, it is nevertheless possible to distinguish a process of economic and demographic expansion that ran in tandem

with the consolidation of political territories and complex power structures in the urban centres. We may thus see the emergence of (early) state systems of organisation that were run by ritual oligarchies, who used tribute and ideology to create and control a dependent peasantry, enabling them to exploit the countryside and to appropriate surpluses. In the absence of reliable rural evidence, our best source of information about these new power structures comes from urban cemeteries at Setefilla (Aubet 1975; 1978), Gandul-Carmona (Ruiz Delgado 1989) and Huelva (Garrido and Orta 1989). The status of these sites is not clear-cut either, however, as the appearance of prestigious burials with built chambers, as for instance at Setefilla, is regarded as an indigenous development by some scholars, while others insist on the oriental affiliation of the cemetery at Cruz de Negro, where simple cremations deposited in urns are prevalent (Carmona; González-Wagner and Alvar 1989; 2003: 198–99). The varied nature of the evidence does in any case support the view that cohabitation and intermarriage between Tartessians and Phoenicians were not uncommon in the Guadalquivir valley.

If the central areas of Tartessos are difficult to characterise demographically and socioculturally, we encounter even more problems to understand its relations with regions further afield in Portugal, Extremadura, the southern Meseta and the upper Guadalquivir. Focusing on southwest Iberia, the starting point for this discussion are the Phoenician colonies of Gadir on the Atlantic coast and the luxury imports in the cemeteries of Alcacer do Sal, Fonte Velha, Almogrebe and, above all, Gaio and Torre Vedras as markers of sociopolitical and cultural transformations in this region. An alternative suggestion is, however, that these objects were imported from the Tartessian area ‘via Extremadura’; the recurrence of toponyms ending in -ipo between the Tagus and Sado Rivers has been cited as an argument in support of a direct Tartessian connection (Torres 2005: 208).

Ongoing fieldwork has, however, begun to outline an alternative scenario that is based on new settlement data from southern and central Portugal that do not support

major demographical movements and large-scale colonisation. In the Tagus estuary, there is, for instance, evidence of internal colonisation in the sixth century BC, as rural settlements were established in association with the main coastal centres of Lisbon and Quinta do Almaraz, presumably in order to supply agricultural produce to the latter settlements that were primarily engaged in productive and commercial activities (Arruda 2003: 15). Rural expansion in the central Alentejo and along the right banks of the Guadiana River during the seventh to the fifth centuries BC has conversely been linked to a disintegration of the Late Bronze Age settlement pattern under increasing demographic pressure on land (Calado *et al.* 2007). The lower Alentejo is in turn marked by remarkable organisational complexity and unusual cultural traditions that include an unusual dispersed settlement pattern and rectangular complex buildings, as for instance at Fernão Vaz (Correia 2007). The occurrence of numerous funerary stelae with 'southwestern writing' further adds to the idiosyncratic nature of the region (Beirão 1986; Correia 1996; Arruda 2001).

In Extremadura, framed by the Guadiana and Tagus River valleys, it has long been assumed that contacts followed a north-south route that has conventionally been termed the *Vía de la Plata* or silver route. An alternative west-east route that was first proposed by Pellicer (2000) and is now accepted by many scholars traces Phoenician influences to the Atlantic coast through the Tagus and Guadiana valleys. Yet another interpretation sees the Orientalisation process in Extremadura in relation with what they label 'Tartessian colonisation' from the lower Guadalquivir (Almagro 1990; Celestino 2005).

On the basis of our extensive fieldwork in Extremadura, I prefer to see these developments in this part of the Iberian Peninsula in terms of an early involvement in the Atlantic and Mediterranean routes of the Late Bronze Age. In this early period, the region was organised through a network of complex chiefdoms that we can track through their jewellery, prestige bronzes and 'warrior stelae' (Pavón 1999;

Rodríguez and Enríquez 2001; Harrison 2004). From the Orientalising period onwards, the region became fully integrated in the so-called 'Regional Tartessian System' and was primarily, if not exclusively, connected with Huelva and other thriving areas of the Guadalquivir such as Seville, Setefilla, Carmona and even Córdoba. Beyond mere technological and cultural transformations, this provoked profound changes in socio-economic, political, territorial and symbolic organisation and representation in Extremadura that set it on a unique historical trajectory within the variegated Orientalising panorama of southern Iberia.

The region itself contributes significantly to this variability, as the changing geology and soils between the Tagus and Guadiana Rivers create notably diverse landscapes with different resources and opportunities. The area around the Tagus is, for instance, rich in pasture and forests, and offers arable land along some of the minor rivers such as Alagón and Salor. Mineral resources include tin and silver and the Tagus and its tributaries have long been renowned for their gold-rich sands. The wide valleys of the Guadiana basin offer a richer agrarian potential, as well as connection routes to the southern shores of the peninsula. The settlement pattern of the Orientalising Late Bronze in both these river basins was organised around prominent places in the landscape that were selectively placed near fords and passes in the main rivers and mountains that divide the waters of the Tagus-Guadiana and Guadiana-Guadalquivir catchments. In my view, it is this layout that facilitated exchanges between these two regions from an early date and that enabled strategic resources such as tin and gold to reach Tartessos. Key sites in this constellation that require more discussion are the villages of Sierra del Algibe in Aliseda and Cierro de San Cristóbal in Longrosán in the Tagus and Guadiana catchment basin and of Medellín and Badajoz on the Guadiana River.

The site of Sierra del Algibe de Aliseda extends for 4–5 ha on a hill slope, and excavation has demonstrated it was continuously occupied between the eighth and the fifth

centuries BC (Rodríguez and Pavón 1999). The area had attracted attention as early as 1920, when the ‘treasure of Aliseda’ was found, which is one of the most striking ensembles of Orientalising metalwork in the west Mediterranean (Mélida 1921) (Figure 28.6). It was found just one km north of this village, but little is known about the precise location and context where it was found. The collection consists of a large number of gold, silver and bronze objects of widely varying types, including diadems, belts, necklaces, bracelets, torcs, earrings and rings, including swivel seal rings, but it also comprises a glass jug. These objects have been taken to suggest that they come from an elite female burial, but there is no further evidence to support this view. The jewellery that may be dated between the seventh and sixth centuries BC may in any case be taken as an indication of the existence of local aristocracies and complex power relations in this interior area of southwest Iberia, who had access to such prestige goods and whom we might guess were involved in the raw materials trade with Tartessos and Gadir. It is relevant in this regard that excavations at the site of El Cierro de San Cristóbal de Longrosán, in the southeast of the province of Cáceres, have uncovered evidence of extensive exploitation of cassiterite deposits between the ninth and sixth centuries BC. At this site, cassiterite was dug up in small trenches, separated from the quartz that encloses it, ground down and added to molten copper in small crucibles (Rodríguez *et al.* 2001). Given the location of El Cierro de San Cristóbal, it is, however, more likely that the extracted mineral was exchanged via the site of Medellín rather than Aliseda.



Figure 28.6. The Aliseda hoard from Cáceres that was accidentally found in 1920 (Aranegui 2000: 253).

Medellín is situated on an isolated hill on the banks of the Guadiana River, overlooking both the fords in the river and the fertile surrounding lands. This strategic location enabled it to act as a broker between the peoples of the Tagus basin and of Tartessos, along similarly located sites further along the Guadiana such as Badajoz and Lobón. Medellín is widely regarded as a major urban centre, not so much because of the poorly known settlement itself (Almagro 1977; 2008) but rather on the basis of the rich cemeteries. Even if there are no clear ‘princely tombs’, the numerous luxury goods and prestige items such as ivories, imported goods and seals do attest to a distinct aristocracy who subscribed to an explicit ‘Orientalising ideology’ and effectively exploited a large territory and its inhabitants. The ‘agropolitan’ domain of Medellín, as it has been dubbed, requires, however, far more research to appreciate its sociopolitical and regional importance.

Evidence from the district around Medellín goes some way to fill this lacuna. The Orientalising site of Cierro Manzanillo, situated 14 km northeast of Medellín, represents a small rural settlement comprised of four or five rectangular houses with large paved and drained courtyards. Attached to one of these was a forge used for iron working, while stone platforms, a raised storage facility and cereal

remains offer evidence of crop processing and storage. No vine or olive seeds were found, however (Rodríguez *et al.* 2009). The village would have been home to 12–15 peasants, and may be seen as part of a project of agrarian colonisation led by the *oppidum* of Medellín between the seventh and the sixth centuries BC (Figure 28.7).



Figure 28.7. Aerial overview of the Medellín area with indication of rural settlement recorded in the 2006–2007 surveys (Rodríguez *et al.* 2009: 211).

Targeted surveys in the vicinity of Cerro Manzanillo and Medellín have, however, given us a good idea of rural settlement in the area defined by the Matapeces, Ruecas and Guadiana Rivers. People lived in small villages, hamlets and even smaller sites of a type that is still difficult to define. While there is some suggestion of external contacts, the material culture shows that the majority of inhabitants came in all likelihood from neighbouring settlements such as Magacela and Entrerríos that were inhabited during the Bronze Age but that appear abandoned in the Orientalising period. It is not impossible that the abandonment of these sites was related to demands and expectations of rural production and land use by elites in Medellín. Whether or not access to these lands involved ties of dependency or servitude and tributes, Medellín does appear to have played a key role in its organisation, and it is therefore likely that the rural colonisation of the region was intended to provide

agricultural surpluses that could be exchanged externally (Ferrer *et al.* 2007: 213).

Archaeological fieldwork has also shown, however, that agriculture was not the only rationale for the occupation of the Extremadura countryside in the Orientalising period. From the early sixth century BC, elites themselves moved into the countryside, where they constructed rural settlements of a clearly Orientalising appearance. The oldest and best known of these sites is at Cancho Roano, where buildings B and C were built in the sixth century BC. They are two superimposed mud-brick buildings that include isolated structures interpreted as ‘altars’ and that underlie the interpretation of the buildings as sanctuaries. Building C includes a structure or ‘altar’ shaped like an Egyptian *schon*, while building B has an oxhide-shaped feature (Celestino 2001) (Figure 28.9). It is unfortunate, however, that most bronzes and Orientalising prestige goods in Extremadura come from poorly known rural contexts. It is consequently difficult to decide whether the jugs, incense burners, braziers and sculptures come from funerary contexts, such as Villagercía de la Torre, Siruela and Villanueva de la Vera, settlements or ritual sites, such as Valdegamas, Guerrero de Medina de las Torres and Torrejón de Abajo. Where such information is available, as in the lower Guadalquivir valley, it becomes clear that these objects tend to be associated with cemeteries or urban contexts (Rodríguez and Enríquez 2001: 187–89). It is in this light that I insist on the prominent agrarian dimension of the Orientalising period in Extremadura, especially in the central Guadiana valley, and a gradual process of ‘latent rural hierarchisation’ which reached its peak during the fifth century BC, in the wake of the sixth-century crisis in Tartessos (Rodríguez 2009).

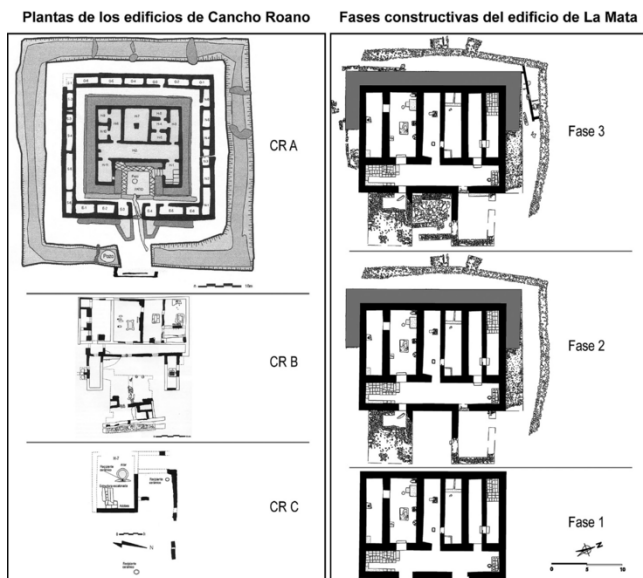


Figure 28.9. Plans of the rural elite residences at Cancho Roano (Zalamea de la Serena) and La Mata (Campanario), both in the Badajoz area (after Celestino 2001: figs 8, 16, 24; and Rodríguez Díaz 2004: 592).

The Sixth-Century Crisis and its Impact on Coastal Southwest Iberia

The crisis of the mid-sixth century is a topic whose causes and consequences continue to be debated. Without going into too much detail, factors that are generally accepted to have played a role include the fall of Tyre in 537 BC, the rise of Carthage and its alleged bid to control the erstwhile Tyrian foundations, the expansion of Phocaeen trade and the battle of the Sardinian Sea around 535 BC and indeed the Roman treaty with Carthage of 509 BC. It is difficult to single out a primary cause, but it is clear all the same that these developments coalesced and collided to transform the central and west Mediterranean into a stage for competition and open conflict. In parallel to the historical testimonies, archaeological research in southwest Iberia has brought to light destruction layers and even abandoned settlements both on the coast and inland, a recession in the metals trade

that Huelva controlled, the disappearance of prominent sanctuaries and high-ranking burials, as well as the collapse of agrarian settlements and the disappearance of crafts; in other words, there are abundant indications of widespread social instability (Escacena 1993; Ferrer 2007). While there are enough uncertainties, and we need more information on a range of matters, there is nevertheless general agreement that the central decades of the sixth century represent a period of ‘crisis and transition’, in which regional and inter-regional trade networks were readjusted. The socio-economic, political and ideological repercussions were felt beyond the southwest, even if they played out differently in different regions of the Iberian Peninsula (Aubet 2009: 344–48).

By the end of the sixth century BC, Gadir had increased its political and economic profile and maintained its influence over the Atlantic coasts of Morocco and southern Portugal, while the west coast of Portugal gradually loosened its ties with Gadir (Arruda 2005: 300; 2007). The resulting Gaditanian sphere of influence has been termed the *Círculo del Estrecho* or ‘Circuit of the Straits’ (Tarradell 1960; Niveau de Villedary 2001) and has even been interpreted in political and military terms as a ‘Gaditanian league’ (Arteaga 1994). On the Mediterranean coast itself, many of the Phoenician trading posts were abandoned to make way for larger colonial settlements such as Baria, Abdera, Sexi and Malaka; Carteia was a later addition to the series. The nucleation process of the colonial settlements went hand in hand with important ritual and ideological changes that are most evident in the funerary sphere. Another result of Gadir’s rise to prominence was that it also engaged in long-distance contacts, in particular with Carthage and Ampurias.

Nearby related settlements such as Castillo de Doña Blanca, Las Cumbres and San Fernando show that between the fifth and the third centuries BC, the Gaditanian economy was based on processing and trading of secondary products from both land and sea, namely wine and salted fish. Extensive surveys and excavations along the northern shores of the bay of Gadir have uncovered up to 30 factories that

specialised in the production of salted fish and *garum*. Agricultural production in the wider surroundings of Gadir likewise intensified, as is demonstrated by a proliferation of rural farms and villas, even if only the site at Cerro Naranja has been explored in some detail. Equally extensive are the remains of ceramic kilns for the production of especially designed amphorae to pack the wine and salted fish, such as, for instance, the so-called Maña-Pascual A-4 type (Carretero Poblete 2007). The Punic appearance of these sites has been taken up to argue that the intensification of production around the Bay of Cádiz was boosted by strong Carthaginian connections and possibly an influx of Lybio-Phoenician migrants into the area (López Castro 1992; López Pardo and Suárez 2002; Ferrer 2007). This view is, however, hotly disputed, as there is also a good argument to be made that the elites and institutions of Gadir enjoyed substantial political and commercial autonomy throughout the fifth to third centuries BC (Domínguez 2005–2006; Niveau de Villedary 2001; 2008). In this view, it was only in 237 BC, when Hamilcar Barca landed in Gadir, that the autonomy of Gadir and the wider region was curtailed, initially by Carthage and later by Rome.

Redefining the Interior Territories of the Southwest before the Romans

Sociopolitical and ideological transformations in the coastal districts also had important repercussions in the interior of the southwest. In the lower Guadalquivir, the centuries after the demise of Tartessos are known as Turdetanian. As on the coast, settlement in the Guadalquivir lowlands was organised around a series of ‘central places’ that were both fortified and urban. They exploited the agricultural resources of their immediate surroundings but also tapped into their connections with the ‘Circuit of the Straits’. Good examples are the *oppida* of Alcalá del Río, Seville, Setefilla and Carmona that all had remained continuously occupied from earlier centuries. In the countryside, however, Turdetanian settlement was much less stable, as many previously existing rural sites were abandoned. The

Carmona-Marchena area showed the most continuity of rural settlement, which has been ascribed by some scholars to and read as evidence of the strength of its central organisation from the Orientalising period onwards (Ferrer *et al.* 2007: 212). These sites also stand out, however, because their notably Punic appearance cannot just be ascribed to the older Orientalising influence of Gadir, and many scholars have indeed interpreted this as indicative of a pre-Barcid Carthaginian presence or at least engagement in the area. A key argument put forward in support of this view are Punic coins from el Gandul and the Carmona district that date to the fourth century BC and that have been interpreted as evidence of Carthaginian troops to control the territory, mercenary recruiting or support of Gadir (Pliego 2003; Ferrer 2007). While acknowledging that these coins may certainly be related to mercenary recruitment in the Guadalquivir valley, it has also been pointed out that they do not necessarily imply a Carthaginian presence on the ground, as Carthage had long been recruiting mercenaries from a wide range of regions in the Mediterranean for its military exploits in north Africa, Sardinia and Sicily. In the absence of firmer evidence, these scholars do not accept a substantial Carthaginian presence in southern Iberia before the Barcid conquest of the late third century BC (Domínguez 2005–2006). In this view, any Carthaginian activity in the Guadalquivir valley and surrounding interior regions was focused on the main mining districts and agricultural areas. The ‘Punic influence’ in Carmona and other places may therefore be ascribed to regular indigenous engagement with Carthaginians, even if often perhaps antagonistically (Bendala 1994: 65–68).

Further west, in the central Alentejo, increased social and economic inequality have been observed as the main development apparent in the fifth century BC, when the largest and most complex settlements of Espinhaço de Cão, Casa das Moinhola-3, Malhada das Taliscas-4 and Gato consolidated their dominant position (Figure 28.8). By the end of the century, most rural sites had been abandoned, even if smaller and other types of rural sites did not entirely disappear, particularly in the more fertile areas (Mataloto

2007). In the lower Alentejo, similar trajectories of rise and fall have been documented for the settlements and associated cemeteries at Fernão Vaz and Neves-Corvo (Correia 2007; Maia 2008). As a result, an entirely new settlement pattern came into being between the fourth and the second centuries BC that became known under the label of *Ferro II Continental* (Continental Iron Age II) and that was associated with incoming Celtic peoples (Silva and Gomes 1992: 165–85). Unlike before, the new settlements were fortified, and are usually referred to as *castros*, and the portable material culture combines features from the south with elements typical of the Meseta highlands of central Iberia; it is certainly substantially different from the southern regions of Gaditanian and Turdetanian culture (Arruda 2001: 287–88; 2007: 139).

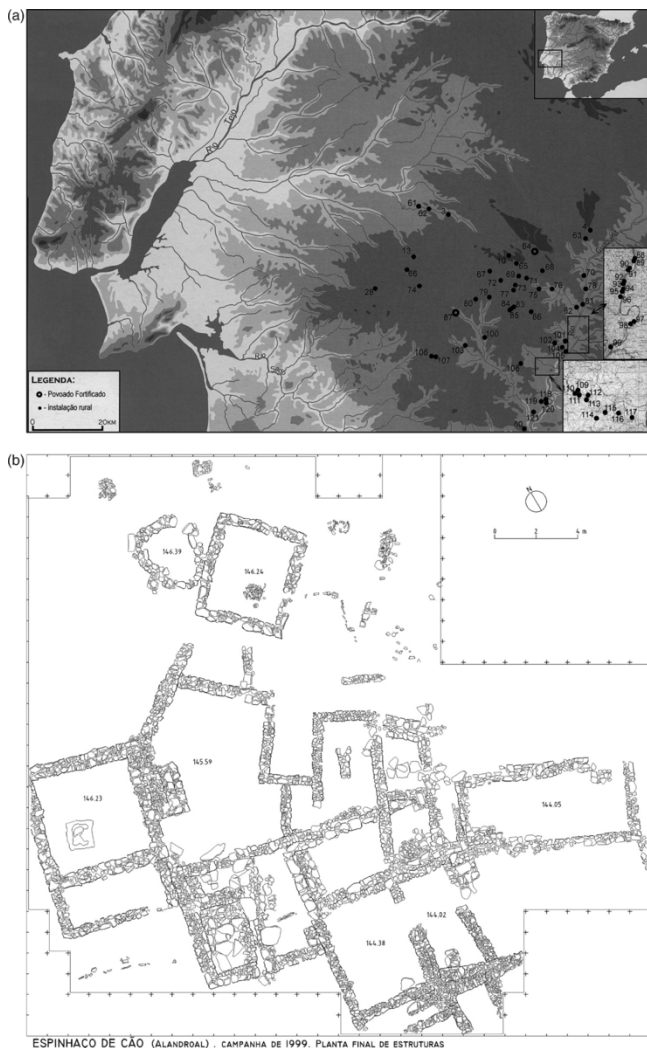


Figure 28.8. (a) Map of settlement distribution in the Alentejo (Portugal) during the post-Orientalising period (Mataloto 2004: pl. 66). Plan of the rural site at Espinhaço de Cão (Alandroal; Calado *et al.* 2007: 149).

The Tagus and Guadiana basins of Extremadura did not escape the impact of the collapse of Tartessos either, and a general demise of the Orientalising urban model has been noted in many settlements such as Badajoz, El Risco and Aliseda. The most evident case is that of Medellín, where the

settlement area contracted substantially and the number of burials declined sharply to the point that practically no burials have been recorded from the second quarter of the fifth century BC (Almagro 2008). Most rural sites in the surrounding area were also abandoned, as the Orientalising model of sociopolitical and territorial organisation effectively broke down.

The break in town–countryside relationships resulted in a general fragmentation of power, as the major Orientalising centres lost their dominance. In this relative power vacuum, rural hierarchies developed between the mid-sixth and the fifth centuries BC, as many communities and local elites sought to assert their local significance. As traditional forms of rural power were reinstated and land ownership redefined, rural and local aristocracies rose to prominence throughout southwest Iberia. As they fell back on social and cultural rules and ideological principles of the past, Orientalising features and appearances did not disappear. They were, however, thoroughly reworked and adapted to the new situations, in which local elites resided in the countryside in monumental but dispersed ‘post-Orientalising’ rural centres that were surrounded by small dependent farms.

This model of ‘cellular and disjointed’ power is archeologically based on the evidence of building A at Cancho Roano and the site of La Mata de Campanario (Maluquer 1981; Celestino 2001; Rodríguez 2004) (Figure 28.9). While debate is ongoing as to whether it is best understood as a ritual or palatial site, building A is defined by a U-shaped plan that opens up to the east and has two projecting structures or towers. In its final phase, the only entrance was in the north bastion. Each of the rooms of the building served a domestic, ritual or administrative function and opened to a large transversal corridor that could only be accessed from the central space. The existence of an upper floor is likely. The whole complex was demarcated by a type of casemate wall, an embankment and a ditch. The amount of finds was huge and includes amphorae, querns, bronzes, jewellery, silver and glass items; Phoenician imports date the

site to the fifth century BC (Celestino 2003).

Just 20 km north of Cancho Roano is the site of La Mata, which resembles its neighbour in many ways, even if its architecture and portable material culture are less grandiose (Figure 28.9). It is a two-storey construction, oriented towards the east and with towers along the facade. The lower floor consists of three sets of two interconnected rooms dedicated to respectively domestic, storage and residential purposes. Only one room of each set is connected to a long corridor that runs the width of the building. At the northern end of the corridor, a small wine press was installed, while a staircase at the opposite end led to the upper floor, the layout of which probably mirrored that of the ground floor. The presence of more than 50 querns suggests that the building was covered by a flat roof that was used as a communal outdoor milling area. The finds from La Mata are numerous, although there are fewer and less luxurious prestige objects than at Cancho Roano, which may indicate differences in status of the owners (Rodríguez 2004: 590).

La Mata has been interpreted as the residence of a large aristocratic family group of perhaps 15–30 persons, who controlled a large territory that encompassed both farmland in the lower valley and grazing in the uplands. The environmental evidence shows that the former provided cereals, pulses, fruit trees, vines and olive trees, while the higher ground consisted of Mediterranean woodland that provided firewood, acorns, hunting ground and pasture for cattle, sheep and goat, and pigs (Rodríguez 2004: 69–72). Archaeological surveys in the area around La Mata have recorded around 40 small rural sites in the agricultural lowlands, whose occupants may be assumed to have been dependent on the rural aristocracy living at La Mata itself. A short distance of around one km from La Mata stood a large burial monument that consisted of an ashlar-built chamber tomb that was covered by a massive earth and stone tumulus. Having been excavated in 1930, there is unfortunately no record of the grave goods recovered, but it is nevertheless clearly a prestigious burial monument that

was in all likelihood built by and for members of the dominant family at La Mata. It offers an excellent example of attempts to legitimise the elite possession of the land by marking their ancestral presence on the landscape (Rodríguez 2004: 542–45).

The ‘post-Orientalising’ form of organisation that had the local ‘lords of the land’ live in close proximity to the peasants lasted until the end of the fifth century BC. The combined pressure of the internal contradictions of the system and from peoples of the Meseta highlands and the emerging Iberian states (Ruiz Rodríguez and Molinos 2007) was too much to bear, and both Cancho Roano and La Mata as well as other similar sites on the Guadiana were destroyed and abandoned (Rodríguez 2004: 599–602).

The collapse of post-Orientalising rural aristocracies led to a new cycle of sociopolitical and cultural readjustment that resulted in the settlement pattern known as *Hierro II* or the second Iron Age. In the central Guadiana valley, this involved fortified *castro* sites along the Ardila, Zújar and Matachel River valleys. In the Ardila basin, we find sites such as Capote, Martela, Belén and Castillejos-2, whose material culture combines elements from the south and from the Meseta highlands and Alentejo (Berrocal 1992). The economy of these *castros* was based on agriculture, and almost all sites excavated have yielded evidence of iron working. Settlement in the Zújar-Guadiana and Matachel basins was by contrast more varied, and at sites such as Tabla de las Cañas on the Zújar and Entreríos at the Zújar and Guadiana, confluence material culture can be related to both the Meseta highlands and Turdetanian and Iberian regions further afield. In the central Tagus valley, the pre-Roman inhabitants, who may be identified with the later Lusitani and Vettones, also lived in fortified *castros* (Rodríguez and Enríquez 2001).

Conclusions

The ethnic-cultural panorama of coastal and inland southwest Iberia thus presents rich and complex processes of

protohistoric development and diversity. A wide range of physical landscapes and a variety of resources and economic opportunities enabled and supported multiple and fluid exchanges as well as sociopolitical networks that became increasingly more complex and ideology-laden during the first millennium BC. Key to what happened is the basic fact that southwest Iberia constituted a crossroads of ways and peoples throughout this time.

It may nevertheless also be clear from the foregoing that developments were far from linear and predictable. They remind us on the contrary that phenomena such as urbanisation and state organisation were not the only solution and the unavoidable destiny of a historical process, but should rather be seen as mere probabilities within the uncertainties inherent in human behaviour. Faced with a growing range of possibilities, the rural world offers a critical space for understanding protohistoric 'urban societies', especially as both hierarchical models and heterarchic systems are increasingly being found to underlie their organisation.

This multifaceted, ever changing and unpredictable system of ethnic and regional identities and organisations came to a halt in 206 BC, when Roman legions marched down the Guadalquivir valley and imposed a *foedus* (treaty) on Gadir. In time, the entire southwest was reoriented towards Rome and underwent profound political, socio-economic and cultural reorganisations usually captured by the term Romanisation.

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29 Domestic and Settlement Organisation in Iron Age Southern France

Maria Carme Belarte

Abstract

Archaeological research in the southern French regions of Languedoc-Roussillon and Provence over the last 30 years has extensively excavated a significant number of Iron Age sites. Most are settlements, while cemeteries remain much less well documented, particularly during the Late Iron Age and in the eastern Languedoc. In the absence of ancient documentary sources and given the scarcity of funerary evidence, settlements offer the best information about Iron Age society. Houses in particular provide crucial information about protohistoric households and society, as they constituted the focus of daily life and stood at the centre of economic, cultural and social activities. The analysis of domestic architecture from the seventh century BC to the time of Romanisation has shown that houses became more varied over time in terms of both typology and function. I discuss the connections between changes in indigenous architecture and external influences, and consider the significance of households and social distinction for the transformations of houses in southern French Iron Age society.

Introduction

This chapter concerns domestic architecture and its

occupants in Mediterranean France during the Iron Age. In geographical terms, the study area is defined by the Mediterranean Sea and the mountain ranges of the Pyrenees, Alps and Cévennes, which roughly coincide with the modern regions of Languedoc-Roussillon and Provence ([Figure 29.1](#)). As for the chronological period, the French Iron Age begins in the seventh century BC and runs until the Roman conquest in the late second century BC. This period is usually divided in two phases – the Early and Late Iron Ages – but there are no agreed beginning or end dates for these two phases ([Dietler 1997: 275–76; 2005: 29](#)). In this chapter, I will follow the chronology proposed by Michel Py ([1993: 21](#)), who dates the Iron Age between 675 BC and the change of era, and the transition from the Early to the Late Iron Age between 525–425 BC.

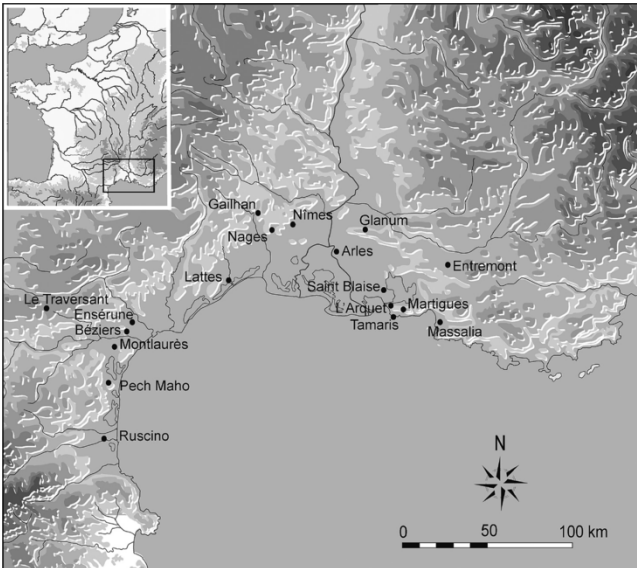


Figure 29.1. Map of southern France with the location of the main sites mentioned in the text (map background: Michel Py).

In the last 30 years, extensive excavations have been carried out at many sites, most of which are settlements. We are consequently much less informed about cemeteries, in particular during the Late Iron Age and in the eastern

Languedoc. Because the evidence for settlement types, urbanism and domestic architecture is now rather good, in this chapter, I will focus on houses to investigate the protohistoric societies of Mediterranean France.

In the study area, Iron Age houses consist of one or more spaces with combined functions; their domestic nature is evident from the remains of food preparation and consumption such as hearths, food, cooking pottery, querns and so on, but other activities such as storage and productive tasks were also usually carried out in these spaces. The spaces of a house may be connected or not, and adjoining yards may be present as well.

The specific character of each house emerges from a detailed analysis of domestic features and artefacts that make it possible to identify activities carried out in each room and to interpret their functions. Even if some scholars have called into question whether it is possible at all to recognise protohistoric houses (Boissinot 1995: 75), it is my view that Py (1996) has convincingly demonstrated with his research in Lattes that functional and spatial analyses do allow the identification of protohistoric houses in southern Gaul. There remain nevertheless important questions to be resolved, in particular concerning numbers of occupants and household composition, and these matters make up the topics of discussion in this chapter.

Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Traditions: Wattle and Daub

Houses of the early Iron Age (675–575 BC) show numerous and strong continuities with Late Bronze Age traditions. Even some caves continued to be occupied, but open-air settlements represent the most frequent type. They consisted of groups of huts (*cabanes*) or houses made of perishable materials (Michelozzi 1982: 19–34; Dedet 1987: 177). The sites do not appear to be planned, and there are no indications of a distinction between private and public spaces. The houses are not oriented in any particular way, although they are separated by open areas, where hearths,

pits or granaries have occasionally been recorded. It is possible that new huts were built and organised in accordance with kinship relationships and the domestic cycle of households, as has been observed in contemporary African contexts, but clear evidence is lacking (Herbich and Dietler 1993; 2009). The settlements tend to occupy less than one ha, although there are significant exceptions, such as the site of Carsac (Carcassonne), which measures around 25 ha (Guilaine 1986: 179).

The houses that make up these settlements had very simple plans, varying in shape from round to oval, rectangular and irregular, and were mostly smaller than 20 sq m, as for instance Le Laouret (Aude; Gasco 1995: 57) and La Liquière (Py *et al.* 1984). In his analysis of 248 huts of this period, Bernard Dedet (1999: 325) proposed an average size of 11 sq m for the Languedoc. Recent research at Le Traversant (Mailhac) and Ruscino (Perpignan) has not only confirmed this variability in size and plan but also in the functions of the structures.

During the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages, Le Traversant is made up of absidal houses, some of which were defined by postholes, hearths and pits, while others had been built with earthen walls (Figure 29.2). The biggest house had a surface of 50 sq m (Gailledrat *et al.* 2000: 176; 2006–2007: 41). A similar house plan, dated to the end of the sixth century BC, was excavated at Ruscino (Marichal and Rébé 2003: 144–59). This one measured 48.3 sq m (10.5 × 4.6 m) and had a double absis. Its perimeter was defined by postholes, and four larger posts had stood in the central area to support the superstructure. Traces of charcoal and clay suggest that the walls were made from perishable materials and covered with mud plaster.

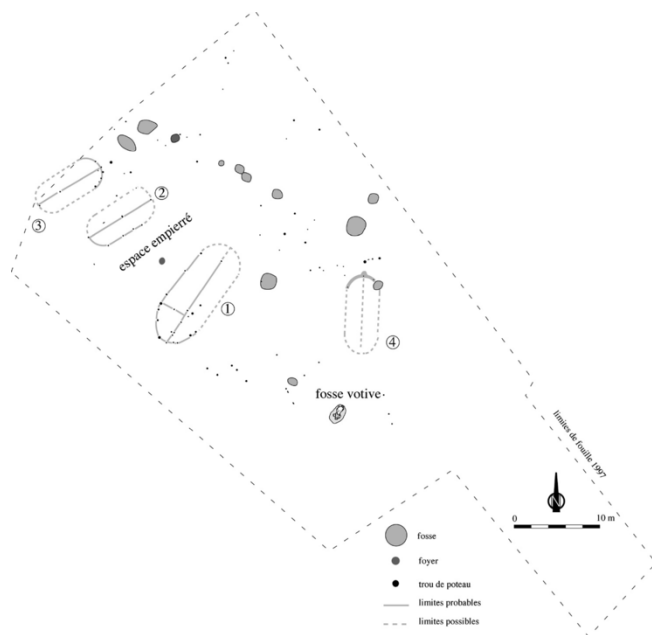


Figure 29.2. Plan of the structures excavated at the site of Le Traversant (Mailhac, Aude), and restitution of the early Iron Age house plans (Eric Gailledrat).

The only traces of these houses are the postholes and ditches that outline their perimeter, while the wattle and daub used to make walls and roofs has left few remains. There were no internal partitions, but the distribution of domestic features and other remains suggests that certain areas were dedicated to distinct activities: there is usually a hearth in the central part of the building, an area for domestic tasks and a zone reserved for food storage, mostly at the rear. This appears to have been the organisation recognised at Laouret (Floure, Aude; Gasco 1995: 57), while the house in Ruscino saw most activities concentrated in the northeastern part, where three clay benches, an oven and two hearths were found (Figure 29.3). Although nothing had been preserved at the opposite end, the central position of the two hearths and the benches could point to a similar use of space as in the house at Laouret. The archaeological remains mainly consisted of food refuse and pottery related to food preparation and consumption. There was not much

storage pottery (Marichal and Rébé 2003: 182–88; Gasco 1995: 50–61).



Figure 29.3. Internal view of a reconstructed hut at Ruscino (Perpignan, Pyrénées Orientales) (Maria Carme Belarte).

These houses have been interpreted in general terms as occupied by small groups of people. How these groups were constituted is unknown, as little or no attention has been given to kinship and domestic structures in protohistoric southern France. While building techniques and domestic features have been described and studied in great detail, domestic activities and the people involved have hardly been topics of investigation. It is nevertheless widely assumed that the protohistoric house was the residence of a nuclear family (Py 1993: 70). At least in the early Iron Age, the size of the main area of the house points to four to five occupants, who could make up a nuclear family.

The domestic features and other finds from the houses do not indicate social differences, despite the variation in size. Overall, the evidence suggests that most economic activities were carried out inside the huts or immediately outside, that is, in a domestic setting, while the absence of large storage structures attests an economy without surplus (Garcia 2004: 35). Even so, there would always be several activities that went beyond the house and that would have been carried

out in shared spaces, in some instances collectively as well. The ovens, hearths and pits recorded in the open areas between the houses probably represent such shared usage and joint work. The large enclosures and ditches around some settlements such as Carsac offer evidence of collective labour (Guilaine [1986](#): 179).

Building Techniques and House Plans: Colonial Contacts and Indigenous Traditions

One of the major changes in protohistoric domestic architecture of southern Gaul is the appearance of houses with rectangular plans, load-bearing mud walls on stone foundations, shared party walls, and often with the rear built against the rampart of the settlement. This kind of architecture is closely associated with the first urban plans that consisted of regular housing blocks of houses separated by streets. Construction of these houses began by the end of the sixth century BC in coastal Languedoc and Provence, while they appeared in the interior from the fifth century onwards (Dedet [1999](#): 315–21).¹ The earliest houses coexisted with those built in wattle and daub.

The appearance of new settlement patterns, architectural forms and building techniques have often been interpreted as related to colonial encounters (Michelozzi [1982](#): 85; de Chazelles [1995](#): 51–54; Dedet [1999](#): 317), because the first contacts between the indigenous communities and other Mediterranean peoples (Greeks, Etruscans and Phoenicians) took place during the transition period from the Bronze to the Iron Age (750–675 BC; Dietler [1997](#): 277–91; [2005](#)).

The site of Lattes is of particular interest in this regard, as its foundation layers, documented in zone 27, are closely linked to the Etruscan trade in south France. In its earliest phase around 500 BC, the settlement was already surrounded by a stone rampart with houses arranged perpendicular to it, that were built of stone and mud-brick to rectangular plans with shared party walls ([Figure 29.4](#)). Two of these houses have been explored, and each has

yielded such a large amount of Etruscan pottery, mainly amphorae, that an Etruscan presence in this area of the site seems likely. After the first phase had been destroyed and abandoned, the whole block was rebuilt in the early fifth century BC, but the houses were constructed with load-bearing posts, and Etruscan pottery was not very common (Lebeaupin and Séjalon 2008: 45–64; 2010: 138).



Figure 29.4. View of the destruction layers about 600 BC in zone 27 at Lattes (Hérault) (Michel Py).

This situation is similar to that documented in other Mediterranean areas where colonial contacts had been intensive. In Catalonia, the indigenous site of Sant Martí d'Empúries, where later Emporion was to be founded, is a good case in point. In the second half of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth centuries BC, when the first Etruscan and Phoenician imports appeared, houses were built with mud walls on stone foundations and shared party walls. In the next phase (625/600–580 BC), the houses were replaced with new ones supported by posts of the Bronze Age

tradition (Aquilué 1999: 126).

These examples show that the early Iron Age (late sixth to fifth centuries BC) was a period of experimentation, that saw the first rectangular houses with roof-bearing walls and urban plans, while building techniques still varied considerably and shared party walls were not consistently used. Even if external influences can be detected in the building techniques and Greek elements have been recognised in their metrological system (Tréziny 1989), the resulting houses and urban layouts were largely based on similar conceptions, and use of space and indigenous traditions were to persist in later centuries. It has even been suggested that Greek settlers in Marseille might have adopted indigenous building techniques rather than providing new ones for the local communities (Dietler 2005: 134).

The houses with rectangular plans and roof-bearing walls were built using mud-bricks, cob or rammed earth, i.e. using mixtures of mud and clay, sand, clay and straw or heavily compacted gravels, sand and clay. Mud-brick in particular is usually thought to have been introduced from elsewhere in the Mediterranean and distributed in southern France from Marseille, while rammed earth has long-standing indigenous roots. Mud-brick walls on stone bases gradually replaced traditional building techniques, however, and became the dominant way of wall construction by the Roman period. Roofs were made of a wooden frame that was covered with branches and earth; roof tiles were practically unknown. Those tiles found in Lattes have in fact been argued to have been used for gutters and culverts to channel rain run-off (de Chazelles 1996: 280). The house surfaces (walls, floors, roofs) were finished with earth plasters, often complemented with pebbles, flagstones and (crushed) pot sherds.

Houses were normally grouped in regular blocks, and their plans and any changes were closely related to the overall layout of the protohistoric towns. The earliest compact houses coexisted with others that included open spaces such as courtyards. Good examples of the latter type, consistently separated by open areas, have been documented at Le Plan

de la Tour, Gailhan (house 1: Dedet 1987: 15–38; Figure 29.5), Montlaurès, where they are dated to around 500 BC (de Chazelles 2005: 248), Pech Maho (ca. 540 BC: Gailledrat and Solier 2004: 375) and Lattes (from 450 BC onwards; Roux 1999: 31–48 and fig. 28; Belarte 2008: 103; 2010: 204; Belarte *et al.* 2010). Analysis of the open spaces between houses of the fifth and fourth centuries BC in Lattes has shown that they were mostly used for food processing and cooking, as is evident from the ovens and hearths but also from generous quantities of refuse such as ashes, charcoal, faunal remains, seeds and so on (Figure 29.6). Sheds, annexes and other minor buildings continued to be built in perishable materials (Belarte 2010: 205).

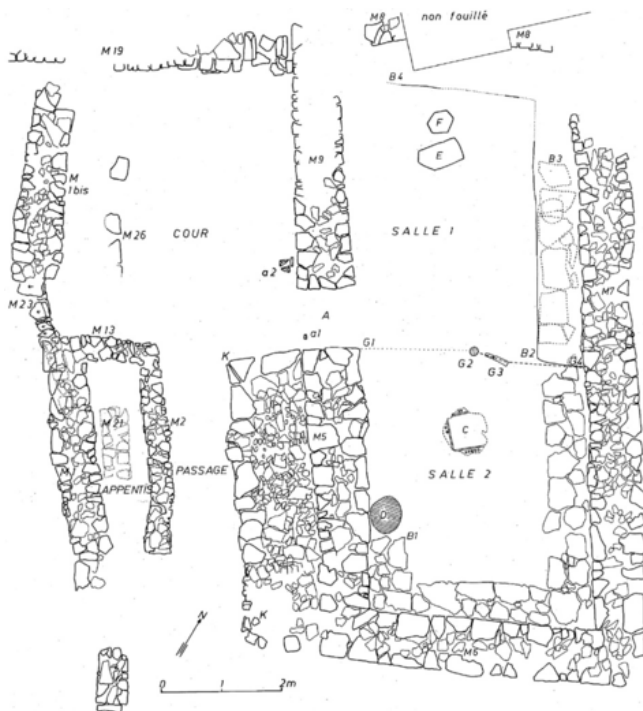


Figure 29.5. Plan of house 1 at the site of Le Plan de la Tour, Gailhan (Gard) (Bernard Dedet).

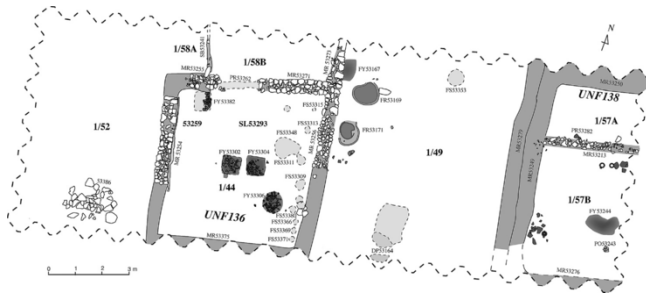


Figure 29.6. Plan of zone 1 at Lattes (Hérault) during the phase 1P (450–425 BC), with houses separated by open areas (Maria Carme Belarte and Eric Gailledrat).

Settlements organised in regular housing blocks appeared in Provence from the early fifth century BC onwards. At Saint-Pierre-les-Martigues, L'Arquet and L'Île (Martigues), for instance, housing blocks were separated by streets running parallel to the ramparts (Chausserie-Laprée 2005: 98). The houses themselves were simple single-roomed buildings without internal partitions, measuring between 10 and 20 sq m. During the fifth and fourth centuries, house plans remained quite simple with mostly just one or two rooms (e.g. Dedet 1987; 1999; Py 1996; de Chazelles 1999; Belarte 2008). At Lattes, one of the most extensively excavated sites, houses measured between 17 and 87 sq m, with an average of 40 sq m in the fifth century BC (Belarte 2010: 213–15)

Use of Space and Social Implications

The evidence discussed indicates a substantial continuity in the use of space from the Late Bronze Age onwards. The size of the houses suggests that they were occupied by nuclear families, while the open areas between the houses point to strong links between their occupants, who shared these spaces for domestic activities. Private and collective spaces were initially not strictly separated and the subsequent transformation of open areas into enclosed domestic spaces may be explained through kinship links.

In terms of social organisation, the first sites with urban plans do not show clear evidence of significant social

differences, as no large or otherwise prominent houses have been identified. Different house sizes at major sites such as Lattes nevertheless suggest that a process of social differentiation was probably underway by the fourth century BC. It is plausible that this development related to decisions about the distribution of space, the size of house plots and the definition of areas for common use, as such decisions could be collective in a mainly egalitarian society, but it is on balance more probable that an elite was emerging behind these decisions.

Around the same time, the use of space was becoming increasingly specialised, as meal preparation, consumption and storage took place in different rooms. Cooking was mostly concentrated in the front rooms, close to an open space, but there is also frequent evidence of cooking in unroofed areas such as yards and patios, whilst storage, limited as it was, was usually to be found in the back rooms. If houses were not subdivided, these activities were carried out in different areas of the same room, as at l'Île (Martigues), where the destruction layers of the one-roomed houses have yielded concentrations of hearths, ovens, silos and pottery (Chausserie-Laprée 2005: 132) (Figure 29.7).



Figure 29.7. Photo of the destruction layers of house BI, in the fourth century BC, at Martigues (Bouches-du Rhône) (Jean Chausserie-Laprée).

The First Complex Houses of the Fifth

Century BC

Even if most house plans and sizes were quite regular and similar, more complex layouts have been documented in Arles and Béziers. In Arles, housing blocks of the early fifth century BC have been brought to light in the 'Jardin d'Hiver' area, where houses were made up of a large courtyard of 60 and 70 sq m, around which several rooms were situated. In the first half of the fourth century BC, the courtyards became much smaller and measured just 7–9 sq m. Strong Hellenic influences have been noted at this site, as the architecture was based on the same metrological system found in Greek colonies such as Agde and Olbia, while Mediterranean pottery imports made up as much as 70–85% of all finds during the fifth and the fourth centuries BC (Arcelin 1990: 196; 1995: 329–30; 2004: 253).

In Béziers, house 1 has been dated to the second half of the fifth century BC. The preserved area measures around 115 sq m, but the original size has been estimated at at least 150 sq m (Olive and Ugolini 1997: 96). It consists of eight separate spaces, including an interior courtyard surrounded on three sides by covered rooms. According to the excavators, both the courtyard-based house plan and the use of roof tiles are without parallel in protohistoric southern France, with the exception of Arles, and may thus denote Greek influence (Olive and Ugolini 1997: 97–98).

In both cases, the organisation of space around a central courtyard, the number of rooms and the overall house size are clearly different from contemporary indigenous houses in Languedoc and Provence. In Arles, the use of space was moreover notably specialised by the fourth century BC, as most rooms appear to have had specific functions. In Béziers, the excavators interpreted one room of house 1 that was situated next to the courtyard as a cooking area, but a lack of finds did not allow further consideration of the functions of the excavated rooms.

Late Iron Age Traditions: Courtyard

Houses

After the first period of urban experimentation during the late sixth and fifth centuries BC, houses became more uniform and compact, tightly organised in housing blocks separated by streets, which in turn were laid out more or less concentrically within the sites (Figure 29.8). Their inhabitants did not entirely forget traditional building types and techniques, as is shown by a fourth century house in Lattes that was built of perishable materials, even if it was also part of a rectangular housing block (Roux and Chabal 1996).



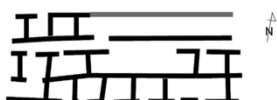
Figure 29.8. Aerial view of Lattes (Michel Py).

By and large, houses generally remained unchanged in every site throughout the fifth and the third centuries BC. Plans, building techniques and finishing of the houses were relatively homogeneous within any given settlement. At the same time, houses gradually became larger, as the number of rooms increased and spaces fulfilled ever more specialised functions; as a corollary, it became increasingly less common for several activities to take place in one and the same room. In Lattes, the variability of house types that was already evident in the fifth and the fourth centuries BC became more marked in the third century BC, as certain neighbourhoods were given a distinct appearance, such as zones 30–35 with their shell decorations, and house 301 in zone 3 with coloured stone incrustations (de Chazelles 1990: 118;

Belarte and Py 2004: 387–88).

The increased diversity implies social differentiation, especially because it may be related to a growing disparity in settlement types and functions. From the fifth century BC onwards, new and different kinds of settlement appeared, the significance of which has perhaps not been sufficiently appreciated. Among the Late Iron Age sites, a distinction may be made between major urban centres that measure around 10 ha, such as Arles, Lattes or Nîmes, and small towns such as Verduron near Marseille of 3000 sq m (Garcia 2004: 140–42) and small farms such as Coudounèuf just 1000 sq m (Verdin *et al.* 1996–97: 167). This suggests a hierarchical organisation of settlement and economically specialised sites that were probably controlled by a specific group of people, who presumably occupied the larger houses.

It has also been proposed that pre-established measurement modules were used in some settlements such as Lattes and Les Castels de Nages in order to distribute the available space evenly among households (Py 1978: 149; Tréziny 1989: 39 and 41; Garcia 1996; 1999; 2004) (Figure 29.9). That does not mean, however, that it was impossible to extend a house at the expense of public space (Belarte 2009: 240). In Lattes, for instance, there were several houses of one- or two-roofed rooms, where an adjacent part of the street was transformed into a yard, which would eventually be turned into a covered room of the house, thus transforming public into private space. House 406 is a case in point, as it was transformed into house 409/410 in the fourth century BC (Lebeaupin 1994: 35–62; Py 1996: 177–83) (Figure 29.10). In Nages, all houses were expanded in the early second century BC by roughly the same proportion (Py 1978: 153–55). While this did not change local social differences, the transformations do denote a desire for more space, perhaps because of a changing conception of domestic life that saw previously collective activities transferred to the private domain.



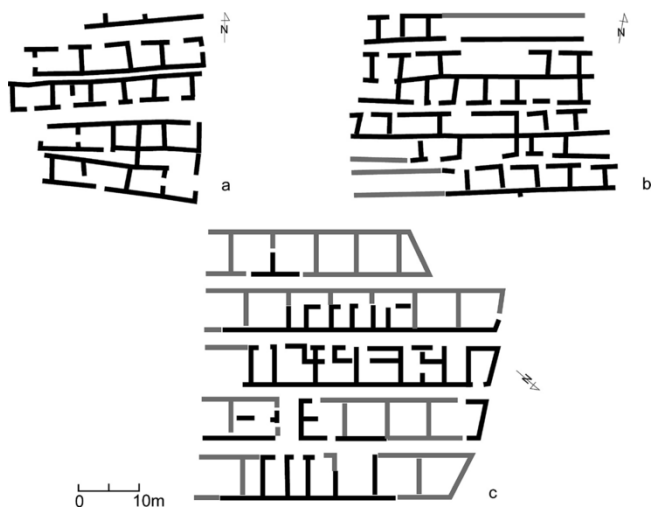


Figure 29.9. Schematic plans of blocks 30–35 at Lattes (a), second village of Martigues (b) and sector A of Nages about 175 BC (c) (Maria Carme Belarte [2004](#)).

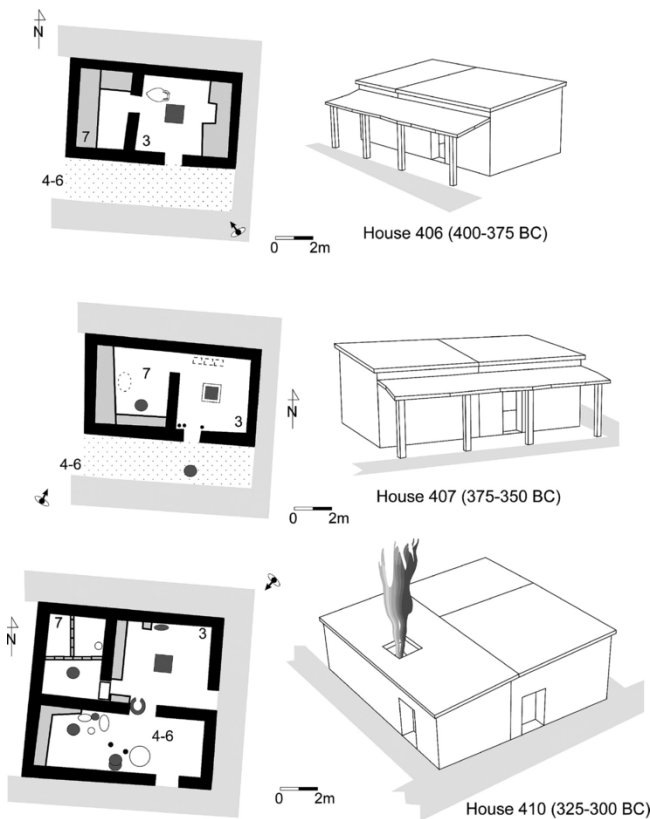


Figure 29.10. Transformation of house 406 at Lattes (Hérault) from a two-roomed dwelling with a front yard into house 410, a house with three-roofed rooms, during the fourth century BC (Michel Py).

From the third century BC, rooms and spaces in general were used for increasingly specialised functions, in particular in long-occupied sites such as Lattes and Pech Maho. In the aforementioned house 301 at Lattes, for instance, dated to 225–200 BC and with an overall size of 147 sq m, the four rooms fulfilled complementary functions: one large room was dedicated to food preparation, a second one with three benches to food consumption and the other two were used as living rooms (de Chazelles 1990: 115–25; Py 1996: 170). House 58A-58B-58E at Pech Maho, with a total floor surface of 133.4 sq m and of the same date as house 301 in Lattes, is made up of three rooms, where 58A

is a multifunctional space, 58B is a storage room also used for milling or roasting grain and 58E is a space for cooking and eating, i.e. with domestic and social functions (Gailledrat and Belarte 2002: 601; Belarte *et al.* 2011: 65–66) (Figure 29.11).



Figure 29.11. Plan of house 58A-58B-58E at Pech Maho (Sigean, Aude) (Eric Gailledrat).

Alongside these changes of house size and specialised use of space, building techniques and domestic features such as hearths, ovens, benches, storage pits and so on remained unchanged, which underscores the basic continuity of traditions throughout the Iron Age, even if some Mediterranean influence may be noted in some houses (Belarte 2004: 383). Basically, the protohistoric house was and remained a centre of daily life throughout the Iron Age, where domestic activities such as meal preparation and consumption took place, together with economic activities such as storage, and small-scale craftwork, social life and occasionally ritual celebrations. That does not mean that nothing changed, of course, and one variation that has been noted is that gradually more space was allocated to storage. In Lattes, this is first evident in the third century BC and even more so in the second and first centuries BC, when it became one of the main domestic functions alongside cooking and consumption (Belarte 2004: 382). Several houses even included a room exclusively dedicated to grain storage. Since such quantities clearly exceed those of

household consumption, it is likely that much of the grain was exchanged (Py 2009: 214–15). This transformation therefore not only points to an increase and intensification of agricultural production but presumably also made the household wealthier and gave them more means to acquire other goods. More generally, the third century BC is a period of increasing specialised household production (Belarte 2004: 363).

Another development, also well attested in Lattes, is the gradual disappearance of cooking ovens that had been common throughout the fifth and fourth centuries BC (Py *et al.* 1992: 280). They were usually situated in open spaces and front yards, or even in a front room close to the door, which both served ventilation and made it easy to share the oven and its products. The reduced number of ovens and the relocation of existing ones to enclosed spaces such as a central courtyard underline once more the increasing importance of private space. It might also be another instance of specialised domestic production.

Mediterranean Traditions: Courtyard Houses in Southern France

Courtyards or more generally uncovered spaces constituted an important feature of domestic life in southern Gaul from the early Iron Age onwards. They took on a new dimension in the third century BC, when they were integrated into large dwellings, appropriately known as courtyard houses, which differed from other houses in size and plan. They are basically compact buildings with an internal courtyard surrounded by several covered rooms and with the courtyard as the central domestic space, it is evident that they were based on a rather different concept of domestic life than that of the earlier houses with a frontal yard.

Courtyard houses are usually regarded as derived from Hellenistic models elsewhere in the Mediterranean, Italy in particular (Py 1996: 249). Early instances are the houses in Arles and Béziers already discussed, and they became widespread in southern Gaul between the third and first

centuries BC, with examples recorded in Lattes, Glanum, Ensérune, Entremont, Saint-Blaise, Marseille and probably Nîmes. Based on plan, origins and formation processes, three main groups of courtyard houses may be distinguished (Belarte 2009: 247) (Figure 29.12).



Figure 29.12. Schematic plans of courtyard houses (type 1: 1–2; type 2: 3–4; type 3: 5–7): 1. Béziers, 2. Marseille, 3. House 5201 at Lattes, 4. House A in Block 10 at Ensérune, 5. House 901 at Lattes, 6. House 3501 at Lattes, 7. Block X at Entremont (Maria Carme Belarte).

Type 1 courtyard houses were built in a context of strong Greek influence, as the previously described house 1 at Béziers (Figure 29.12: 1) and the houses of the ‘Jardin

d'Hiver' in Arles that date to the fifth century BC. A much later example datable to 250–50 BC has been documented in Marseille, and its excavators insist on the Greek origins of the house plan (Conche 2001: 134) (Figure 29.12: 2). The building has three wings surrounding a courtyard, covering an area of almost 400 sq m. The southern wing, made up of four rooms, had an artisanal function, probably metalworking, while the western one included a room with a paved *opus signinum* mosaic floor that has been interpreted as an *andron* or 'men's room'; the northern wing fulfilled domestic functions. Although Marseille has yielded little evidence for the fifth and fourth centuries BC, it has been assumed that older predecessors of this building are likely to have existed.

Type 2 courtyard houses are found in indigenous settings. They were vast buildings with regular plans and large courtyards. The oldest examples have been recorded in Lattes, where they are dated to the third century BC. The most extensively excavated ones are buildings 52101 and 54101 that feature indigenous building techniques such as stone walls, mud-bricks, earthen or pebble floors (Figures 29.12: 3, and 29.13). All rooms explored were used for a range of activities, as they included both hearths and pits as well as domestic waste, although there was also one storage room with circular pits for supporting storage vessels (Dietler *et al.* 2008: 122).

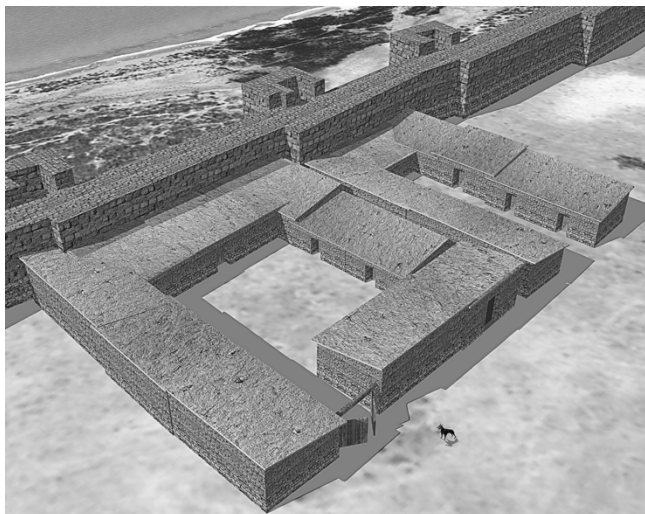


Figure 29.13. Virtual reconstruction of courtyard houses 5201 and 5401 at Lattes (Michel Py).

Several type 2 courtyard houses are known in Glanum, including the so-called ‘House of the Antae’ that was first built in the second century BC (Van de Voort 1991). It was built with large, well-cut stone ashlar, which are without precedent in indigenous architecture. It occupied nearly 800 sq m, including a 240 sq m internal courtyard. At Ensérune, house A of housing block X is a later example of this type that was built in the second half of the first century BC. It covered 525 sq m and was organised around a central courtyard that included a large cistern and that was surrounded by a covered porch through which the rooms of the house could be accessed. The roof was covered with Roman tiles, but the walls, floors and plasters were all executed in indigenous protohistoric traditions (Gallet de Santerre 1968: 41–56) (Figure 29.12: 4).

Type 3 courtyard houses are the result of existing houses that were reorganised and combined. They are accordingly characterised by irregular plans, and an interior courtyard is more or less the only feature that houses of this group have in common. The courtyard is even not always located centrally in the house. In Lattes, three examples of this type have been recorded, namely 901, 1605 and 3501 (Figure

29.12: 5 and 6). They are dated to the second century BC and were created by combining two buildings that were part of two different housing blocks. They were originally separated by a street, which was partly transformed into the courtyard. These houses are likely to have been inspired by older type 2 houses in Lattes and may therefore be regarded as denoting similar changes in lifestyle. Another example of this type of courtyard house has been documented in Entremont, where housing block X (site 2), dated to 150–130 BC, includes a house of several rooms around a small central courtyard (Figure 29.12: 7). There is evidence of regular domestic life throughout this house but also of several specialised activities (Arcelin 1987: 71). Housing block 8 at the same site possibly had a similar organisation. At Saint-Blaise, finally, several houses in housing block 2 dated to 175–125 BC also had their rooms laid out around a courtyard (Bouloumié 1992; Arcelin 2004: 254–55). A defining feature of the type 3 courtyard houses is that the rooms appear to be evenly distributed around the courtyard, while there was actually a hierarchy of spaces as a result of the history of the house (Pinon 1999: 255). The type 1 and 2 courtyard houses were rather more regularly organised.

The appearance of courtyard houses has usually been interpreted as the result of acculturation under Greek or Italic influence (Py 1996: 250). Because many Greek houses between the fifth and third century BC included an open courtyard surrounded by rooms (Zacaria Ruggiu 1995: 291; Nevett 1999: 23–24; 2005: 3), it has generally been assumed that this concept had been adopted in the Greek colonies or indigenous sites with foreign inhabitants in southern France. As already noted, Greek influence seems quite plausible for the type 1 courtyard houses.

Greek or Italic influence could also explain the appearance of the type 2 and 3 courtyard houses from the second century BC onwards, as they could have been adapted from the *atrium* of contemporary Italic houses. There were in any case many local adaptations, as the symmetry and axiality that are typical of the Italic houses (Zacaria Ruggiu 1995: 358; Fernández Vega 1999) is unknown in the southern

French ones. From a functional perspective, it is equally difficult to see clear connections between the indigenous courtyard houses and their Italic counterparts. The construction techniques, finishing and minor domestic features of the southern French houses are moreover predominantly indigenous (Py 1996: 250); the only evident exception is the so-called 'House of the Antae' in Glanum with its ashlar walls of a more obviously Greek type. It is therefore just the exterior form (plans) that was adopted from elsewhere and adapted to the conception and use of space of the indigenous world of southern France.

To sum up, the complex house types of southern Gaul developed in two phases: in the first one, beginning in the fifth century BC, several courtyard houses were built under Greek influence; in the second phase, indigenous versions were created that followed either Hellenic or Roman models. In Lattes, the large type 2 houses were first built at the beginning of the third century BC, and they cannot therefore be attributed to Roman influence. It is, however, possible that they were adapted from Hellenistic houses in Marseille, as Lattes maintained close contacts with the city.

The Use of Space in Courtyard Houses

The central courtyard houses differed from their protohistoric counterparts in both ground plan and conception of space. In the latter tradition, courtyards opened onto streets or were shared by two houses, and some domestic activities took place in these (semi-)public or collective spaces. The courtyard houses were by contrast inward-looking, as the courtyards sheltered the occupants from the outside and thus provided privacy.

From a functional point of view, one might expect a more specialised use of space in the larger courtyard houses with more rooms, but in most cases it has been difficult to assign clear functions to rooms because the available evidence is mostly rather limited as a consequence of either incomplete records of old excavations or simply poor preservation. It is nevertheless relevant to note that most courtyards had access to good light and ventilation and often had water

management structures such as gutters and cisterns, whereas the front yards of the older houses were mostly used for cooking and had generally been more closed off; the presence of hearths confirms that point. By and large, the use of space varied considerably between houses, and most rooms appear to have been multi-purpose ones. In Lattes, for example, domestic features such as hearths and pits and similar artefacts occur in more than one room and suggest that similar activities took place in most rooms. Storage was the only exception to this apparent rule. The conclusion, therefore, has to be that the adoption of a new house type with a different spatial organisation did not necessarily entail a different use and functional organisation of domestic spaces, at least as far as the available archaeology evidence suggests.

Complex Houses and their Occupants: Households and Social Organisation

The variability of ground plans, sizes and increasing segregation and specialisation of space in the Late Iron Age are arguably related to social changes. One interpretation is that Iron Age society in southern Gaul was egalitarian, given the homogeneous forms and dimensions of domestic architecture (Arcelin 2004: 241). In this view, it is only by the Late Iron Age, in particular from the third century BC onwards, that a process of social differentiation began, initially prompted by Italic trade and later, during the second and first centuries BC, influenced by Roman presence.

The evidence of domestic architecture suggests, however, that social differentiation and elite formation predated Roman contacts. At Lattes, for example, the first complex houses indicate social differences already in the third century BC, before trade with Italy became important. Economic or political factors would therefore seem to have played a more important role, depending on the nature of the sites concerned. Social changes during the Late Iron Age are also evident in the different relationship between public and private spaces and indeed the ability of elites to occupy

parts of public space (Belarte 2004: 383; Dietler *et al.* 2008: 120). The latter is made most evident by the type 3 courtyard houses, as most of these blocked off a street; but it is not confined to these houses, as it has also been noted in fourth-century Lattes and Nages, where streets were narrowed if not entirely closed by expanding houses.

Comparable developments have been observed further south along the Iberian coast, where complex dwellings were built in Valencia as early as the fifth century BC and in Catalonia during the fourth and the third centuries BC. The largest of these has been brought to light in Ullastret: it is a house of about 800 sq m, which was created by combining two pre-existing houses. Its construction also required a street to be closed off and even appropriated access to the rampart. This house has been interpreted as the residence of a large aristocratic household (Martín *et al.* 2004: 266).

Complex houses may well reflect external influences, but that in itself does not adequately explain why they were built in the first place, and changing use of space is more readily related to social complexity (Kent 1990). From this perspective, I would therefore propose three distinct, if not exclusive, interpretations of the variability of house plans and the emergence of complex houses, which intersect with my view of Iberian houses (Belarte 2013: 87–89).

The first one is that larger houses such as the courtyard ones were occupied by more people. Combining two pre-existing buildings, as in the type 3 courtyard houses, substantially increased the available domestic space, and the implication of a wish or perceived need to do so implies that the household itself had expanded and required more space for its members. The increase of space could, however, only be proportional to the increase of household members, if each and every household member always had access to the same space – and ethnographic evidence suggests that that is usually not the case – because large households include dependants, or some occupants have more privileges, for instance through polygamy (Van der Berghe 1979: 163; Netting 1982: 657). We have, however, no textual or archaeological indications that this was the case in southern

Gaul.

Another possibility is that the larger houses belonged to wealthier people, and ethnographic evidence indicates that correlations may exist between house size, number of rooms and wealth of occupants (Kramer 1979; Horne 1991; Netting 1982). In southern Gaul, however, the archaeological evidence of the large courtyard houses is unfortunately insufficient to decide whether their inhabitants were richer or were involved in different economic activities than the rest of the population. It is in the end only the house form and sizes that make them stand out.

The two interpretations may also complement each other, as the households with more members, even if some of them were dependants, could well also have been the wealthier ones, who also lived in larger and complex houses. Ethnographic evidence suggests once more that elites often have larger households because they control more resources and take care of specialised functions of an administrative, social or economic nature (Van den Berghe 1979: 163; Flannery 2002: 425). It would therefore not be unreasonable to interpret the complex houses in the major sites of southern France as belonging to large elite households.

A third view is that differences in the size and structure of houses reflect different stages in the domestic cycle of the household occupying the house (Tourtellot 1988; Gerritsen 1999: 81–82; Goodman 1999; Normak 2009: 239). The simpler dwellings may thus correspond to households in the initial stage of their formation, while the more complex ones could be the result of rooms added to accommodate new household members. Combining two pre-existing houses to create type 3 courtyard houses may for instance also imply the joining of two previously separate households through marriage and the birth of a child.

Neither Classical texts nor archaeological evidence can, however, inform us adequately about family structure and socio-economic organisation of protohistoric communities in southern Gaul. We are therefore left to conclude that the increased domestic space in courtyard houses would have

accommodated a larger number of occupants, and that the many rooms suggest that the household was divided into smaller units. It is thus not too far-fetched to propose that the courtyard houses were occupied by extended households that in turn were made up by two or more nuclear families. This has been argued in some detail for the courtyard houses in Lattes (Dietler *et al.* 2008: 122) and for certain Greek houses in Delos (Luce 2002: 86–87). The increased significance of privacy in these houses might also be related to cohabitation of distinct families.

The appearance of complex houses and courtyard houses in particular should also be examined in the light of social and economic organisation of indigenous communities. The third century BC is a key moment in their development, when social and economic differences began to emerge and local elites first asserted themselves politically and culturally (Arcelin and Tréziny 1990: 29; Py 1993: 153–57). These elites were based in the major settlements that played a central role in the wider region, and building large residences is likely to have offered a strategy to distinguish themselves (Arcelin 2004). The roots of this presumably predate the third century BC, and the changing domestic architecture of Lattes should probably be seen in this light (Garcia 2004: 89).

Final Remarks

This chapter is the result of ongoing research of domestic contexts in southern Gaul. Despite significant external influences, indigenous architectural traditions of domestic housing, urban organisation and the use of space were preserved in one way or another throughout the period examined. The changes observed in architectural forms and use of space were related to wider social transformations, and the general increase in the complexity of domestic architecture of the Late Iron Age seems to reflect increasing social complexity. At the same time, the appearance of social differences and probably of certain changes in household organisation may have influenced the use of domestic space, as is suggested by the creation of new plans and changing

attitudes towards private space. This process is directly related to the emergence of local elites and the creation of indigenous sociopolitical polities.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Michel Py, Eric Gailledrat, Bernard Dedet and Jean Chausserie-Laprée for the illustrations provided for this chapter.

Note

1 Houses with stone walls and surrounded by a stone rampart were already known in Languedoc in the Chalcolithic (2800–2200 BC) (Coularou *et al.* 2008: 235–39), but the combination with an urban layout was new.

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Life and Death

The connections between life and death are as obvious as they are long-standing. From early prehistory, rock-cut tombs such as the *domus de janas* of late Neolithic Sardinia (late fourth millennium BC), through the Early Bronze Age charnel houses of Bab edh-Drah' along the southern shore of the Dead Sea (third millennium BC), to the Archaic and Classical-period chamber tombs of Etruria, all seem to have been consciously modelled after real-life houses. As is readily evident from features such as doors and windows, some of which were real and others merely evoked in painting or relief sculpture, or roof beams that mimic structural elements of houses but are without any obvious function in a rock-cut chamber tomb, no effort was spared to make death as comfortable and familiar for the deceased as life was for the living.

Beyond these intrinsic connections, the potential for gauging a given culture's social and economic organisation through the burial rituals and grave goods they bestowed on their deceased has not been lost on archaeologists. As early as the nineteenth century, 'antiquarians' labelled exceptionally large and rich tumulus burials in places as different as central Italy and southwest Germany as 'princely tombs' (Ruby 1999). Even if by the mid -twentieth century the self-styled 'new archaeologists' rejected as naïve antiquarian and culture-historical approaches to the past and the archaeological record, Binford's (1971: 23) conclusion to his survey of approaches to mortuary practices was not as radically different as he would have had it: he wrote: '...the form and structure which characterize the mortuary

practices of any society are conditioned by the form and complexity of the organizational characteristics of the society itself.

Looking back at the processual and postprocessual debates of the 1980s and 1990s, in which mortuary practices featured prominently, Chapman (2004: 4) has concluded that '[f]unerary rituals are a means of social representation, not direct social record, although social inference from the material traces of such rituals is still a legitimate aim of archaeological research'. As Parker Pearson (1982; see also 1999) demonstrated in his seminal paper on late twentieth-century burial practices in Cambridge, ideology crucially mediates the relationships between mortuary practices and social organisation and, basically, in many cases, the living would use — if not manipulate — funerals to make statements in the present to the mourners and society at large.

Parker Pearson (1993: 203) also noted, however, that 'the dead ... are sometimes powerful forces in human society' and that funerals and burial monuments could become important occasions and meaningful places that might gain traction of their own. It is indeed through the performance of what are often highly formalised mortuary rituals that the living community engages in preserving people's social memory and in establishing links with their ancestral past. In virtually all aspects, the care and treatment of the dead serve in diverse ways to mobilise the deceased's relatives and the community to which s/he belonged around a set of gestures and rituals of varying duration. Such rituals are often conducted using distinctive types of materials, at a special time and in contexts (cemeteries) that set them apart from the practices of everyday life. In studying 'the archaeology of death' (Chapman *et al.* 1981), archaeologists today look to wider social dimensions, and take up the challenge to relate ever finer and closer contextual analyses of the materiality of mortuary practices to the senses, memories, life courses, ideologies and idiosyncrasies of the people who performed them. Most recently, attention has turned to what Chapman (2004: 7) called 'try[ing] to

understand death in life', which involves exploring attitudes towards death, how people cope with and ritually manage death (Nilsson Stutz and Tarlow 2013: 1; Robb 2013).

In the Mediterranean, Morris (1987; 1992) introduced to Classical studies a quantitative approach to death and burial, emphasising the need to pay attention to the evidence of physical anthropology, while Bietti Sestieri (1992) demonstrated with the central Italian site of Osteria dell'Osa how meticulous excavation and analysis may lead to an understanding of kinship and community relationships. Keswani's (2004) study of Cypriot Bronze Age mortuary practices has assumed the status of a handbook for anyone involved in any aspect of such practices on the island; its discussion of anthropological and other archaeological studies on death and burial is widely cited elsewhere. In an edited volume examining death, identity and social memory, Chesson (2001) uses both grave goods and bioarchaeological data to explore how living members of an Early Bronze Age urban community in the southern Levant mapped both individual and group identities onto the deceased as well as themselves in the act of creating social memories.

Building on these developments in the Mediterranean and beyond, the papers in this section demonstrate that the study of Mediterranean mortuary rituals and social practices associated with life and death is enjoying renewed vigour, and nowadays grapples with such issues as memory and forgetting, emotion, identity and the life course. All these new perspectives suggest that the study of lifeways and funerary practices may be much more ambiguous and subtle in what and how they communicate than was appreciated in earlier studies (Stevenson 2007: 2).

Catapoti (this volume), for example, reinvestigates Early Bronze Age mortuary practices on the island of Crete — the treatment of the dead, the way social roles were enacted during funerary rites and the location of cemeteries within the landscape — and concludes that the people who lived in early Cretan communities developed a common symbolic and material vocabulary for understanding death, memory and identity. In a related paper on third- and early second-

millennium BC Crete (see section on *Materiality, Memory and Identity*), Hamilakis offers up a compelling narrative of a *tholos* tomb burial alongside the examination of two archaeological contexts – one funerary (Prepalatial period), the other habitational (Palatial period) – to argue that remembering and forgetting, and the forging of mnemonic links, were played out in embodied ceremonies and rituals that revolved around commensality and drinking ceremonies. In the western Mediterranean, Montón-Subías examines the funerary and commensality practices, as well as daily management and maintenance activities of the Bronze Age El Argar culture of southeastern Iberia, highlighting the impact of funerary behaviour in forming identity and in expressing social bonds and allegiances. Lillios's study attempts to create bridges between the worlds of the living and the dead, drawing on both archaeological and bioarchaeological evidence for the second millennium BC in southern Iberia and northern Africa, postulating how the living materialised the dead, and how the dead may have structured the lives of the living.

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30 Beyond the General and the Particular: Rethinking Death, Memory and Belonging in Early Bronze Age Crete

Despina Catapoti

Abstract

Over the past century of investigation into Cretan prehistory, the most persistent field of enquiry has been that of the emergence of the ‘palaces’ at the onset of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA). Recently, the long-dominant tendency to portray the third millennium BC on Crete as a developmental threshold leading towards ‘palatial complexity’ has received much criticism. What appears to be gaining ground instead is adherence to the premise that the island’s early history ought to be examined on its own terms. The present study argues that this epistemological shift of perspective poses a false dilemma, for neither causal reductionism nor historical particularism can sufficiently capture the interplay between the general and the particular in sociohistorical analysis. To exemplify this point, the study focuses upon the reinvestigation of the Early Bronze Age (EBA) funerary evidence from the island. The detailed examination of practices concerning the treatment of the deceased, the distribution of roles during funerary rites and the positioning of cemeteries within the wider landscape indicates that, despite any obvious regional patterning, early Cretan communities invested consciously in the establishment of a common symbolic and material vocabulary for understanding death, memory and identity, a vocabulary whose reworking

towards the end of the third millennium BC provides the key for establishing a new historical question regarding the EBA/MBA transition.

The Problem: The General versus the Particular

From the late stages of the nineteenth century until very recently, archaeological work in Crete has been dominated by the concept of the 'palace' in terms of both theory and fieldwork. Even a cursory glance at the tremendous bulk of material and associated literature, from what appears to be one of 'the most intensively explored archaeological periods/localities in the world' (Hamilakis 2002: 3), demonstrates that the appearance of these monumental structures on the island during the early stages of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA), has been taken to signal far more than the development of yet another architectural novelty. Essentially, the general consensus within the confines of the discipline had long been that the 'palaces' ought to be viewed as the clearest token of a watershed event: the establishment of a highly complex form of social organisation on the island of Crete for the first time in its history (Renfrew 1972; Cherry 1983; Branigan 1988).

Largely drawing upon the general principles of evolutionism (Trigger 1998), the term 'complexity' was employed to describe what appeared to constitute a larger, more internally differentiated and more complexly articulated societal body, which relied upon a centralised authority mechanism (i.e. the 'palace') for its effective operation. Under this scheme, history was perceived as the road to complexity, a self-maintaining, self-transforming and self-transcending process, directional in time and therefore irreversible, which in its course generated progress: higher societal forms arose from, and surpassed lower forms (Sahlins and Service 1960: 37–38).

This theoretical understanding of society and history had a large impact not only on the perspectives that we brought to

bear on the period(s) of the so-called palaces but also on the ways whereby the period(s) prior to their construction were understood. The surplus of importance accorded to the palatial phenomenon and the degree of directionality that this phenomenon imposed on the study of early Cretan prehistory is attested in numerous examples, ranging from the distinction of *pre*-palatial and palatial phases (Day *et al.* 1997) (Table 30.1) to the tendency to portray the island as a ‘Minoan entity’, the latter being painted in turn, as a ‘laboratory’ of ‘socio-political achievement’ (Hamilakis 2002: 17).

Table 30.1. *Relative and absolute chronologies for Early Bronze Age (EBA) Crete.*

Early Minoan I (EM I)	Early	ca. 3000–2650 BC
Early Minoan IIa (EM IIa)	‘Prepalatial’	ca. 2650–2450 BC
Early Minoan IIb (EM IIb)	Late	ca. 2450–2200 BC
Early Minoan III (MM Ia)	‘Prepalatial’	ca. 2200–2050 BC

Obvious echoes of this mode of thinking can also be traced in a substantial number of studies focusing on the analysis of the funerary evidence, the richest body of empirical information we have at our disposal from Early Bronze Age (EBA) Crete. A long-standing consensus within the confines of the discipline has been that throughout the third millennium BC, communal tombs were among the main points of reference by which the Cretan landscape and a person’s place in that landscape could be defined (Branigan 1970; 1993). The need to fit collective burials into a framework of interpretation that would somehow justify the subsequent emergence of the palaces on the island can be inferred from the tendency expressed in several writings to portray the EBA/MBA transition as a process leading from egalitarian forms of social organisation, linked to ideologies

of community and the collective, to hierarchically structured societies which were, in turn, linked to ideologies of social exclusion and the individual.

This was a model created from an essentially detached position, since the identity of EBA cemeteries was described only through reference to later periods, only by fitting it into a diachronic totalising framework. In short, the diversity and variability in the funerary evidence had to be ordered, fixed and shaped according to an ideal model, that of 'palatial' society. Under this scheme, it comes as no surprise that what became highly visible in the record of the middle/late stages of the EBA was the unequal distribution of 'exotic' goods and items of 'wealth' in funerary assemblages (Nakou 1995; see also Colburn 2008; Schoep 2010: 66), as well as the appearance of small burial containers (in the form of *larnakes* and/or *pithoi*) in several tombs around the Cretan landscape (Branigan 1993). All these were taken as confirmation that the concept of the individual had 'at last broken free from the demands of communal burial' (Branigan 1993: 66), with the crystallisation of distinction/exclusion being manifested and legitimised by the conspicuous and/or symbolic use of material culture in ritual contexts.

More recently, this impressive and highly persistent core of agreement has slowly begun to dissolve. The main concern expressed in several contemporary writings is that the emphasis laid upon the construction of an evolutionist typology of societal development for Cretan prehistory has not only aimed at the creation of self-sufficient and exclusive analytical categories but has also resulted in a normative and highly deterministic ordering of history. For this intellectual project to be realised, plural differences had to be reduced to abstract forms, for any empirical instance and detail would have threatened (if not undermined) the efficacy of such sociohistorical typologies. In this respect, the silencing of empirical diversity and the simultaneous adherence to the concepts of 'complexity' and the 'palace' provided epistemological security: not only did they guarantee conceptual/analytical unity, a vision of

homogeneity for the archaeological record but they also managed to establish a clear direction of enquiry, a straightforward historical question.

Increasing theoretical problematisation over the foregoing mode of thinking about the early Cretan past led to the realisation that providing an alternative epistemological argument required some radical moves. The primary aim soon became the need to challenge the empirical reductionism and historical determinism that the evolutionary outlook breeds. A new, post-evolutionary agenda began to be formulated, arguing first of all against the idea of the 'societal' and, instead, in favour of the 'social'; the latter was now perceived as 'an overdetermined relational whole, an open field of relations, an indeterminate articulation' (Shanks and Tilley 1987: 59). In this respect, to speak about the early Cretan past meant that we had to take into account seriously the primacy of detail, diversity and heterogeneity in the structuring of social reality. It almost goes without saying that under this scheme, the concept of complexity could not be conceived as an outcome but rather as an ontological condition, hence a *constant* in sociohistorical analysis. For the concept of complexity to be considered analytically useful, it had to be disassociated from the traditional concern/question of what constitutes a complex society, and the focus shifted instead to the complexity inherent in various contexts of social interaction (Kohring and Wynne-Jones 2007). With complexity being used as a given (and not as a desired/predetermined effect), it becomes immediately apparent that post-evolutionary accounts of the Cretan past would also reject the compartmentalisation of history. It was argued in particular that the latter should no longer be portrayed as 'a layer cake or flow diagram' (Shanks and Tilley 1987: 59), but rather as an ongoing, multidimensional and inherently dynamic process that could be captured analytically only by shifting attention from the macro- to the micro-scale. The immediate consequence of the above change of perspective was the conscious avoidance (if not rejection) of the term 'Prepalatial', with the new epistemological vocabulary concerning the EBA period in Crete now bringing to the fore

regional and local histories (Whitelaw 2004).

The disassociation of the third millennium BC from subsequent sociopolitical developments goes hand in hand with the increasing tendency to accentuate the heterogeneous character of the extant funerary record. What is currently professed is that the detailed analysis of mortuary evidence has transformed EBA Crete into 'a complex context', an image that goes far beyond the 'unified culture that the term "Minoan" implies' (Legarra-Herrero 2009: 29). The immediate consequence of this has been the proliferation of studies dealing with the funerary traditions of specific regions, locales or even individual cemeteries (Barrett and Damilati 2004; Relaki 2004; Papadatos 2005; Vavouranakis 2007; Legarra-Herrero 2009), while in a similar vein, the study of different types of material culture (many of which have been used as funerary paraphernalia) highlights the high degree of diversity attested to a variety of levels, such as in production techniques (Day *et al.* 1997; 2006; Whitelaw *et al.* 1997; Carter 1998; 2004; Catapotis 2007), stylistic development (Betancourt 1985: 71) and consumption choices (Whitelaw *et al.* 1997; Wilson and Day 2000):

All this evidence suggests the possibility that communities on Crete lived in completely different ways, to the point where the possibility of culturally different groups should be considered ... Establishing this has the potential to radically change our understanding of Prepalatial Crete, as it would mean different regions possibly having undergone very different processes of change during the Prepalatial period, which need to be understood in their own right. Specific local trajectories may need to replace traditional island-wide models, shattering our ideas of a 'Minoan' culture. (Legarra-Herrero 2009: 31)

If an attempt was made to assess all of the aforementioned developments in early Cretan studies, it could be argued that the differences attested by the two contrasting perspectives are not simply epistemological but also ontological. At a primary level, what is at issue here is how the concept of sociocultural diversity should be specified and how this diversity might relate to wider notions of structure and historical development. A closer look at this dilemma, however, unveils an even deeper conceptual problem for the study of the EBA period in Crete: if we indeed accept that narratives of causal reductionism are founded, as they were, upon an imperialism of the societal totality, could the newly emerging trend of historical particularism be proposing a new kind of imperialism, namely an imperialism of detail (Giddens 1984: 2)?

Looking at how precisely these ‘empire-building endeavours’ (Giddens 1984: 2) have worked in the case of the Cretan EBA, one may indeed appreciate the criticism that evolutionary approaches have received, particularly regarding their tendency to divide the multitudes of different social forms into abstract phenomena, to separate them from contingent detail and to establish this distinction according to the degree to which communities around the island approached ‘palatial society’. At the same time, however, what one soon realises is that post-evolutionary approaches introduce us to a new set of (equally important) problems: to be more specific, entering into the labyrinth of detail surely brings several important advantages (our object of study looks richer all of a sudden), and yet, eventually, the price we have to pay by making this choice is to give up any sense of orientation in our analyses. If the social is equated with notions of multiplicity, diversity and detail, how then can it be possible to identify patterns, or even more so, to specify our analytical categories? And if this fluidity is a constant, how can we then profess to be in a position as analysts to produce historical narratives? Does this imply that history is nothing more than an aggregate of diverse intentions, reasons, motives and expressions that we are somehow unable to assess?

The rejection of the ‘palace’ question left us with an image of early Cretan prehistory that celebrates the ontological potential of ‘acting otherwise’. Otherwise in relation to what exactly? Whereas difference is always established with reference to similarity (Jenkins 1996), the current analytical scheme does not seem to deal with this issue effectively. More to the point, what sort of answer may the post-evolutionary school provide to the question of why, throughout the third millennium BC in Crete, there appears to be an *island-wide* investment in the arena of death? To acknowledge regional diversity is certainly important, but is it not equally significant to address the question of commonality, in other words, to problematise the continuous, spatio-temporal reworking of a common/shared theme? Furthermore, is it not analytically worthwhile to examine how this long-standing tradition is abandoned as we move into the MBA? Leaving aside for a moment the ill-defined question of the emergence of complexity, would it not be plausible to rephrase our historical question on the basis of this very contrast, i.e. the marked visibility of Cretan funerary monuments during the EBA and their subsequent invisibility (disappearance?) from the second millennium BC onwards?

Restating the Problem, Rephrasing the Question

The present chapter brings forward the premise that the identification of similarities at an island-wide level could redirect attention to the wider picture without surrendering detail to totalitarianism. The ultimate aim would be neither to homogenise the record nor to attempt an association of particular practices and/or materials with groups of exclusive membership. Rather, the whole point of this analytical enterprise would be to investigate funerary monuments as a broadly shared vocabulary, establishing the material conditions as well as the structuring principles for the very negotiation of difference. This broadly shared vocabulary would have been predicated upon common attitudes towards death, memory and the deceased, and

possibly a common understanding of the roles and obligations during funerary and commemorative practices. The reworking of this commonality would have taken place during every single performance and on every single occasion; it would have been an issue constantly at stake, for it would always have involved different circumstances, purposes, landscapes and personae, conditions and unknowns. These factors, unique in any given case, are unlimited in scope, for they are conditions of complex motivations as well as creative actions and thus go beyond the scope of any form of (archaeological/epistemological) investigation. It is for this reason that the adherence to the doctrine of regional/local analysis does not guarantee analytical precision and empirical sensitivity but instead incorporates the coordinates of a highly problematic epistemological apparatus.

By acknowledging the diversity and contingency inherent in every single performance and occasion, our perception of history is also radically altered. Although the evolutionist image of deterministic development has been considered highly problematic, the notion that history ought to be envisaged as an amalgam of regional/local developmental trajectories should also be dismissed. Change cannot be sought in nomothetic temporal sequences of societal entities or in the internal workings of a region and/or locale. The scale of change is not the issue here; it is the very concept of change that we need to reconsider. To be more specific, if discussion so far has demonstrated that to study the social is an investigation of the anatomy of sharing and not of diversity, then accordingly to study the historical cannot be about change but instead about continuity and transformation, i.e. the continuous process of revisiting and reworking the elements of change inherent in every occasion; the ongoing process of levelling and reordering the centrifugal tendencies (i.e. the ability to act otherwise) inherent in every single performance. Taking as our new point of departure that the notion of history-as-change ought to be replaced by the notions of continuity and transformation implies that the alternative to the long-dominant definition of the EBA period in Crete as

‘prepalatial’ cannot be a focus upon micro-scale change. Instead, a new direction of historical enquiry ought to be established, which examines critically how the continuous reworking of a broadly shared vocabulary concerning death, memory and identity for a period spanning more than a millennium allowed acts of discovery and remembrance through which traditions of knowledge and of more general moral order were sustained and eventually recalled. It is only through such an investigation that we may begin to understand the concept of reworking; how, in other words, while broader frames of reference continued to operate, some particular traditions of remembrance began to fall away and others to emerge.

For the purposes of this new analytical programme, attention will be directed in what follows to the investigation of three interrelated issues/questions:

(1) If we perceive burials as the medium through which an objective category of death is confirmed, then what conclusions can we draw regarding the treatment of the deceased in EBA Crete? What were the (material and symbolic) strategies employed for the objectification of the image of the dead and how was this reworked through time?

(2) If we define funerary practices as the means whereby the obligations of the mourners are realised, how did the performance of such rituals on the island during the period in question shape people’s understanding of self and belonging? Moreover, how were funerary and commemorative practice affected by (as well as how did they contribute to) the redefinition of roles during such performances?

(3) Finally, if we accept that funerary monuments facilitate a certain order in the distribution of human relations not only during specific funerary occasions but also through their positioning in the wider social landscape, what sort of historical understanding can we provide with regard to issues of memory, identity and value? Put simply, how can we situate this broader issue of order in the context that is the third millennium BC in Crete?

Imagined Communities

It is commonly accepted that the advent of the EBA period on the island of Crete coincides with the appearance of two distinct funerary traditions ([Figure 30.1](#)). The first concerns mainly (but not exclusively; cf. Goodison and Guarita [2005](#)) the south-central region of the Asterousia Mountains and involves a novel architectural type, the *tholos*, a circular edifice designed to accommodate multiple burials (Branigan [1970](#); [1991](#); [1993](#); see also Xanthoudides [1924](#)). The second is attested along several parts of the north coast and involves mainly clusters of small-sized cist or rock-cut tombs, a funerary tradition that, both in terms of morphology and material culture, is highly reminiscent of EBA cemeteries from the Cyclades and, to a lesser extent, from the Greek Mainland (Cavanagh and Mee [1998](#); Day *et al.* [1998](#); Davaras and Betancourt [2004](#): 238; Galanaki [2006](#); Papadatos [2007](#); [2008](#)). To those, a third type may be added, which is defined by the use of caves and rock shelters, a surviving tradition of the Neolithic (Branigan [1988](#)); geographical distribution in the latter case is not region specific and appears instead to span the entire island.

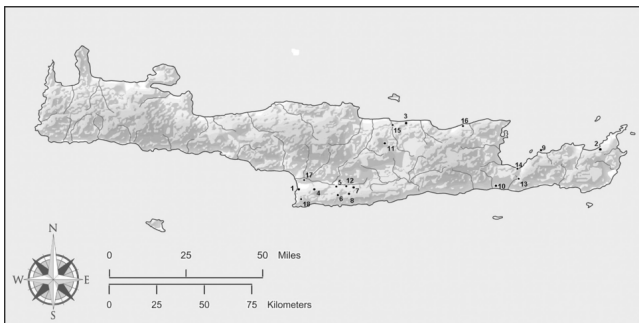


Figure 30.1. Map of Early Bronze Age funerary sites mentioned in the text: 1. Kommos, 2. Agia Photia, 3. Gournes, 4. Siva, 5. Platanos, 6. Aghios Kyrillos, 7. Drakones, 8. Koumasa, 9. Mochlos, 10. Myrtos-Pyrgos, 11. Phourni-Archanes, 12. Apesokari, 13. Vassiliki, 14. Gournia, 15. Knossos, 16. Malia, 17. Phaistos, 18. Moni Odigitrias (Catapoti).

In seeking to provide an understanding of this highly heterogeneous pattern, several scholars have highlighted that the onset of the third millennium BC is a period during which the island of Crete had mainly consisted of dispersed populations and/or fragmented groups (Legarra-Herrero 2009; Nowicki 2002; Relaki 2004; Whitelaw 2000). First and foremost, what has channelled interpretive effort in this direction is the 'occupation of defensible locations (hills, ridges, promontories, rock ledges) and the colonisation of agriculturally more marginal landscapes' during the Final Neolithic/EBA transition (Tomkins 2008: 36). Furthermore, in the western Mesara plain (i.e. south-central Crete), survey evidence indicates that early EBA settlements were mainly situated in high locations, while their small size has been linked with seasonal occupation (Watrous *et al.* 1993: 224). Similar types of early sites have been recognised in the adjacent coastal area around Kommos (where EM habitation seems even more sparse and of short-term character), while in the mountainous area of the Asterousia small-scale sites are also reported; their clustering at very short distances from each other may (once again) favour their interpretation as short-lived installations succeeding each other in the same area (Relaki 2004).

Even though the foregoing description of the extant archaeological record confirms the highly versatile character of funerary expression in early EBA Crete, it could be argued nevertheless that a common denominator might be established at a purely morphological/functional level because the striking majority of these monuments were communal in character (i.e. with the capacity to accommodate multiple burials). Moreover, by being used (and by bearing signs of this use) over many generations, these edifices would have been perceived and experienced as a *shared* place, where common histories and experiences could be inscribed. Even though these *loci* were not continually occupied and frequented only on an occasional basis, conditions would have been laid down concerning their future use. The choice of these places was essentially a collective production of orientation and memory, in that it established patterns of return, interaction and belonging.

It would be misplaced to argue that this image of unity would have extended beyond the occasion of funerary rites and commemorative ceremonies, projecting (and regenerating) itself as a compact value to all other spheres of social activity. Such a suggestion would be an implicit adherence to the long-dominant tendency to view communal tombs as manifestations of an egalitarian sociopolitical regime. Instead, power, authority, roles and identities ought to be perceived as relative to the context in which they are exercised. In this respect, people and communities in EBA Crete would also have been capable of participating in a series of overlapping spheres of practice, developing social strategies and notions of personhood which were occasion specific. Seen from this perspective, the collective character of Cretan tombs during the early stages of their use ought to be approached as a constructed unity, a (material and symbolic) manifestation of togetherness specific to the context of the funerary monuments themselves.

It appears that, for this image of 'collectiveness' to be sustained in contexts such as a *tholos* or a cave, for instance, the final deposition of the corpse into the tomb had to be perceived not merely as a transition from the world of the living to the realm of the dead but also as a 'manifestation of irreversibility', signalling (once and for all) the end of individuality and the complexity of personhood. Individual corpses had to be sacrificed to (if not consumed by) what appeared to be a homogeneous ancestral body (Hamilakis 1998). It is indicative in this respect that this was a technology of sacrifice, a language of mortuary expression that exhibited no apparent concern with establishing *post-mortem* distinctions of any kind between and among the deceased but instead sought to absorb, blend together people who might have never coexisted in life, people of near and distant times. As a result, the interior of these funerary *loci* gave the impression of an undifferentiated whole whilst also provoking a sense of great temporal depth (Catapoti 2005).

In view of the above, it is now necessary to direct our attention to the funerary contexts of the north coast, where images of the collective appear to take a different form. If

we were to establish a common point of reference for these *loci*, this would have to be sought in the forcefulness by which they establish off-island linkages in terms of both morphology and material repertoire. The suggestion that cemeteries such as Agia Photia (Davaras and Betancourt 2004) or Gournes (Galanaki 2006) look like ‘virtual copies’ (Legarra-Herrero 2009: 38) of those found in other parts of the southern Aegean region indicates that implicit in the appearance of every single grave and or material in those contexts was a form of individuation which nevertheless drew attention to common origins. Continuous adherence to this principle would have the effect of manifesting (and objectifying) the network of relationships in which different people, materials and practices were embedded. In fact, it is precisely the enduring tendency to employ this particular kind of vocabulary that may have served as the principle means whereby a focus, a *locus* of return and ultimately a sense of place was constructed for the communities in this part of the island.

Seen from this point of view, strategies of integration in early EBA Crete seem to converge on a very fundamental point: if we take the conspicuous ‘killing’ of subjects in *tholoi* and/or caves as a strategy aiming to evoke a sense of belonging through reference to distant times, then the use/consumption of objects, materials and practices with personalities (i.e. products of complex life paths, which stretched between a number of different types of contexts before final deposition) is a choice that instigates a similar sense – albeit through reference to *absence* and *distance*, i.e. distant/absent worlds that lie beyond the immediate context(s) – of physical co-presence. In sum, it may be plausible to suggest that the main purpose served by all funerary monuments in Crete during the early stages of the EBA was the establishment of a spatio-temporally fixed locus, which materialises (*real-ises*) an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 1983).

A Shift Towards Intimacy

By acknowledging that the emphasis during the early third

millennium BC was upon constructing a sense of belonging through reference to spatial and/or temporal distance, then what we are faced with as we move towards the middle/late stages of the EBA is a fundamental reworking of this funerary/ontological principle. Already from the EM IIa period, northern cemeteries exhibiting off-island links are abandoned, with the exception of the necropolis at Pseira, which nevertheless undergoes significant structural modifications (Betancourt and Davaras 2003). These modifications form part of a wider new trend, which introduces rectangular constructions, commonly labelled as house tombs, to the architectural repertoire of the northeast coast. Meanwhile, in the south-central part of the island, the correlation between *tholos* tombs and the Asterousia range continues, yet examples are now also reported from the adjacent valley of the Mesara.

As we move towards the end of the third millennium BC, probably the most important island-wide development is the marked increase in the number of available rooms/spaces for secondary treatment of the corpse, both within and outside collective funerary structures. Secondary treatment was also a common practice in earlier times (Hamilakis 1998: 122), during the late stages of the EBA period. However, what appears to become an increasingly dominant (hence analytically noteworthy) trend is the obvious concern to present contexts of secondary treatment as *spatially distinct* units (Catapoti 2005).

Loci for secondary treatment in house tombs, for example, were provided by adding rooms to the original edifice (Soles 1992a: 204) (Figure 30.2). In certain cases, these additions seem to have been made long after the construction of the original unit. Even in those remaining cases where both original and additional units belong to the same ceramic phase, the additions appear to be of later date (Soles 1992a: 204–205). Another type of rectangular funerary structure that makes its appearance on the north coast during the late stages of the third millennium BC is also of relevance here: these are large structures with a regular external appearance, subdivided in a number of small rooms by cross

walls usually running parallel to the outer walls and intersecting at right angles. Often the interior rooms do not connect and appear to be isolated cells entered from above (Soles 1992a: 205). Similar developments are also attested in the case of *tholos* tombs (Branigan 1970; 1993; Petit 1987).

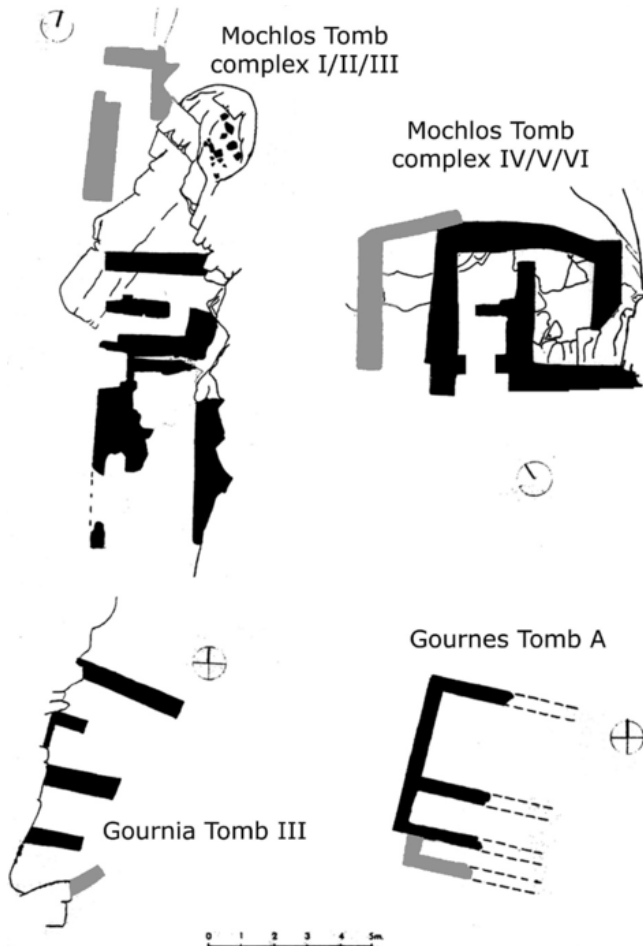


Figure 30.2. Adding rooms to the original unit: house tombs (adapted from Soles 1992a: figs 16, 20, 11, 62) (Catapoti).

In addition to the small antechambers commonly found before the doorways of the *tholoi*, a series of other chambers were now built against the original edifice (Figure 30.3). According to some scholars (Branigan 1970: 95–96; 1993: 63; Petit 1987: 35–37), there also exists a group of tombs

that seems to have had a standardised suite of outer chambers, comprising a small antechamber, a larger outer chamber and a narrow corridor-like room running along the side of both rooms. All these tombs are late EM III/MM I in date, and it is tempting to see them as a late regularisation of an earlier architectural layout (Branigan 1993: 63). Some *tholoi* which belong to this type, such as Siva (Paribeni 1913), Platanos B and Γ (Xanthoudides 1924), have been dated to the early third millennium BC, and yet, even these cases have had suites of outer chambers added to the initial plan at a later stage, possibly during the EM II period (Branigan 1970: 95).

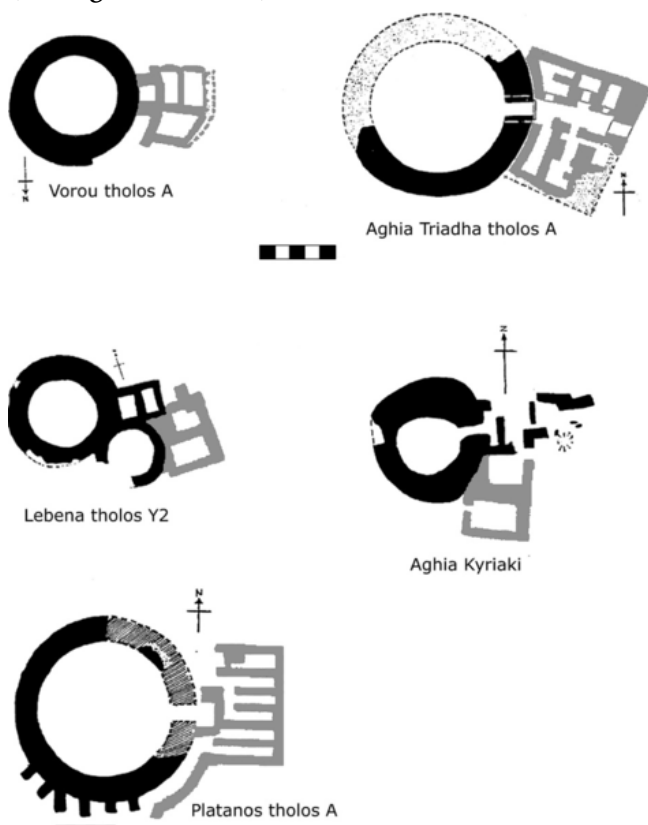


Figure 30.3. Adding rooms to the original unit: *tholos* tombs (adapted from Branigan 1993: figs 5.1, 1.3, 4.4, 2.5, 5.2) (Catapoti).

It is necessary to examine the foregoing structural transformations in conjunction with yet another development of the late stages of the third millennium BC, namely the appearance of burial containers, i.e. rectangular clay coffins (*larnakes*) and large jars (*pithoi*) in an array of funerary sites throughout the island (i.e. large open-air cemeteries, house tombs, caves, rock shelters and *tholos* tombs) (Branigan 1970; 1993; Petit 1987; 1990). In the past, the appearance of *larnax* and *pithos* burials in EM tombs had been taken to signify a developing trend for individual inhumations (even though, initially, they were still made in a communal funerary context) and, by extension, the operation of two different kinds of social strategy, one hiding and the other making explicit the existence of rank and status among the living (Branigan 1970: 127; 1993: 66, 141). In more recent years, the above premise has been challenged, for there is now a substantial body of empirical evidence to suggest that *larnakes* and *pithoi* served as burial facilities for many successive burials but also as ossuaries (Papadatos 2005). It could be advocated, therefore, that rather than individual burials, these containers acted as smaller collective units inside the larger tombs where they had been placed (Figure 30.4).

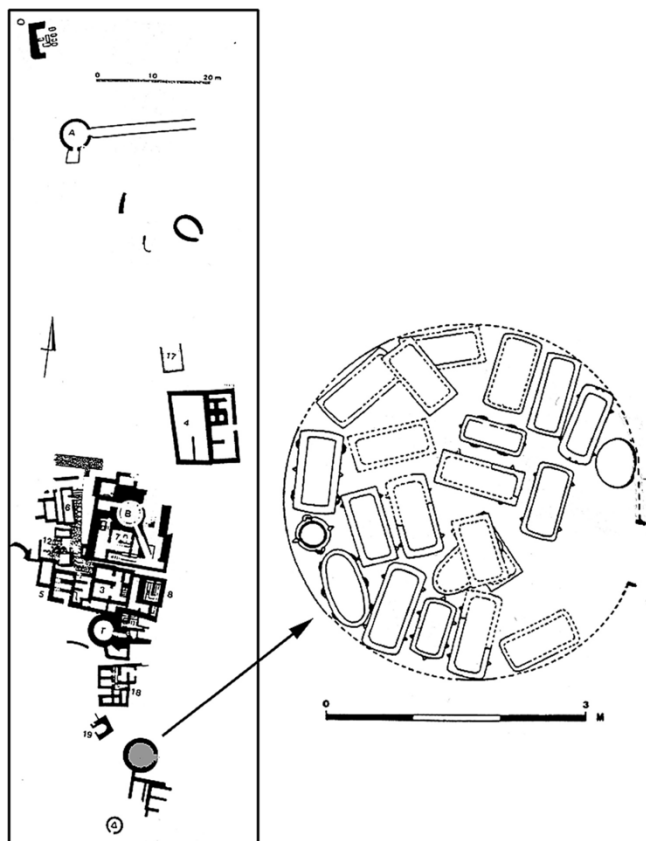


Figure 30.4. *Pithos* and *larnax* burials, *Tholos E* at Archanes (adapted from Soles 1992a fig. 59/plan of Archanes and Branigan 1993: fig. 4.7/plan of *Tholos E*) (Catapoti).

It could be inferred from the above that from the late third millennium BC onwards, funerary structures throughout the island produce an image of ‘diasporic’ belonging (Bell 1999: 3). Burial containers, on the one hand, serve to isolate certain inhumations and burial remains from the rest of the tomb, while the increase of spaces for secondary treatment implies that the removal of burial remains from their initial context of deposition and their dispersal in various parts of the cemetery had begun to constitute dominant funerary strategies. On the other hand, the emphasis laid upon the conspicuous compartmentalisation of these structures may be taken to stem from a need to archive the dead, to

recognise more easily where (the remains of) specific corpses were placed – in other words, to ensure that these groups could be detectable even after death and not enmeshed within a homogeneous totality (Catapoti 2005).

Under these newly established conditions, the integrity of the ancestral body and the notion of imagined belonging are greatly challenged. Every new corpse is placed in the tomb but only temporarily; it is then removed (in some form, at a certain time) and placed closer to a smaller assemblage of remains, possibly to an assemblage that is felt to be more intimate. The impression of intimacy that we gain from the way smaller funerary units are now shaped is accentuated through the structural modifications of the cemeteries described above. In fact, it is precisely this intimacy that now acquires a conspicuous spatial/architectural dimension, with funerary space becoming transformed into a forest of names and close associations as opposed to a homogeneous ancestral surplus (Catapoti 2005).

From Restricted Access to Rotated Obligation

The changing conditions of the late third/early second millennium BC have been examined in an attempt to understand how certain funerary practices could have guided particular forms of discourse with the past and how they would thus have led to the construction of particular forms of community and terrains of belonging. Such discourse and forms of understanding would have occupied a region of time-space; in other words, they would have been occasion specific (Giddens 1985: 244). To know when and how to act on these occasions would require an understanding of the immediate situation, an awareness of position, movement, posture and timing (Barrett 1994; Giddens 1987; Goffman 1971). To a large extent, this practical knowledge would also have been constructed and negotiated through active engagement with existing material conditions. Orientated by all those pre-understandings,

people would enter these occasions, and it is precisely this prior knowledge that would have enabled them to recognise and monitor their conditions and their roles as participants (Barrett 1994; Thomas 1996).

First and foremost, the organisation of a funerary rite would have contributed to the way the relationship between life and death was understood by the participants. The relationship would have been structured spatially as the corpse was carried into death, a journey that terminated at the grave. Each socially recognised death would have initiated the period during which that path had to be followed, an activity that – each time it was repeated – had the potential of inscribing a spatial orientation between life and death upon the remembered landscape.

During the early EBA period in Crete, it is significant that this orientation does not seem to have been widely recognisable, for most if not all funerary contexts (natural and/or built) were either situated in remote (and often not physically prominent) locations (Branigan 1998) or dug into the ground (and only rarely sealed with a stone slab or pebbles on top, i.e. Agia Photia) (Davaras and Betancourt 2004). The marginality of these places would have played a crucial role in the definition of the conditions of access to funerary rituals. This phenomenon appears to be far more pronounced in the case of *tholoi* and cave burials for reasons that pertain to the disturbed nature of these structures. To explain this further, we may begin by suggesting that to the eyes of an archaeologist, the recurrent use of these contexts results in what we could broadly define as a highly disturbed context; the latter, however, could be seen alternatively as an image of inhabited architecture, as the product of a diverse range of practices organised in and through different temporalities (Barrett 2004). In accepting this point, we would also have to allow that this obvious surplus of past temporalities is not only what the archaeologist encounters in the present but also what people in the past would have experienced every time they entered the tomb.

Circulation within these funerary structures would have been difficult, since a substantial part of their interior was

already filled with remnants of past activities (Catapoti 2005; Papadopoulos 2010). Such a situation probably implies that only a limited number of people would have been able to enter the tomb every time the funerary ritual was conducted. Another factor that would have made the actual execution of the ritual difficult would be the poor lighting inside the tomb, resulting from the lack of openings (in both *tholoi* and caves), as well as the sunken floors of a *tholos*'s compartments (Branigan 1993; see also Xanthoudides 1924). Although some kind of artificial light might have been used, a prior experience and knowledge of 'where is what' and 'where to do what' would have been the only means to guarantee that the funerary ritual was carried out effectively and with precision. Under these circumstances, it seems plausible to suggest that the organisation of funerary rituals in communal tombs during the period in question was a responsibility accorded to a specific (restricted) group of individuals.

The presence and actions of those few who would be able to enter the tomb would have contributed to the creation of a cultural geography of time and place (Barrett 1994: 56). By its own actions, this group would bracket a period of funerary activity that would have linked a front space (the tomb's entrance) to a back space (the tomb's interior). This period would commence when the initiates moved through the entrance and terminate as they re-emerged. For those who moved within the funerary edifice and for those who watched, the tomb thus would have represented a container of resources accessible only to the former. The markedly small size of the cave's entrance – and interestingly also the entrances of early *tholos* tombs (not exceeding 50 cm in height) (Branigan 1993) – might have served as a literal as well as symbolic confirmation of this distinction/boundary.

During the later part of the third millennium BC, however, an obvious dismantling of the funerary process takes place. The involvement of more people/groups in the funerary ritual might be implied by the fact that the height and width of the tombs' entrances increase markedly (Branigan 1970: 34–36; 1993: 60). Among late EBA *tholoi*, we find doors

between 1.5–2 m high and 1 m (or more) wide, with examples from Aghios Kyrillos (Sakellarakis 1968) and Drakones Z (Xanthoudides 1924: 76–80). Similar observations can also be made with respect to house tombs. These structures usually consist of three or more rooms, some of which are additions to the initial plan. What is particularly noteworthy is that access to these additional rooms is facilitated by separate entrances, which points to the establishment of a different form of regionalisation: if additional rooms served as ossuaries, then the removal of human remains from their original burial context (the latter being a back space of potential secrecy separated from observers) and their deposition into these added compartments would have necessitated coming out from the tomb. As such, this particular stage of the funerary process would have now acted as a front region, enhancing visibility and demystification. If, on the other hand, the different compartments of a tomb served as *loci* for primary burials, then it is obvious that the introduction of a new corpse to the tomb would no longer entail circulation within the entire compound but only in specific parts of it.

Important observations may also be made with regard to rectangular funerary structures with multiple rooms (Soles 1992b: 205). Often the interior rooms do not connect and, as such, appear to constitute isolated cells, possibly entered through hatches on the roof or through the employment of ramps. The use of cells, on the one hand, indicates a concern for compartmentalisation, the division of the tomb into small units; on the other hand, the arrangement of cells implies that every time a corpse was deposited in any of them, only a limited part of the tomb needed to be used. The division of cells therefore seems to orientate movement and action towards specific parts of the funerary edifice. If, indeed, entrance to the cells was facilitated from above (through hatches or ramps), then this might also indicate that different cells were used simultaneously and/or at different times.

The foregoing process of compartmentalisation attested throughout the island during the late stages of the EBA

would have reinscribed the structural conditions of the funerary process with a new meaning: it does not merely manifest a visible presence of 'known history', but also the crystallisation of a reaction against the established ordering of relations during funerary practice, and perhaps the exclusive control/manipulation of this practice by specific individuals and/or groups. Under these newly established conditions, a greater number of people could actively take part in the execution of the funerary ritual, and it is highly likely that the affinal relationship to the deceased would have been the main criterion specifying who would take over this responsibility every time (Catapoti 2005).

A New Historical Question: From Absence to Presence

During the late stages of the third millennium BC, an increasing investment appears to be laid, at an island-wide level, upon the provision and/or architectural elaboration of open spaces in both funerary and domestic contexts (Branigan 1970: 132; 1993: 127–29; 1998: 19; Hamilakis 1998: 120; Murphy 1998: 36; Driessen 2004: 78–79). Examples of the funerary sector include the cemeteries at Platanos, Koumasa, Mochlos, Chrysolakkos (phase I), Myrtos-Pyrgos, Archanes, Apesokari II and Aghios Kyrillos (Xanthoudides 1924: 6, 90; Soles 1992a: 223; Georgoulaki 1996: 85) (Figure 30.5). From the settlement sector, public/open areas (at times with a specially laid pavement or surfacing) are reported from the EM IIb settlements at Vassiliki and Myrtos-Phournou Koryfi, as well as the EM III/MM Ia building complex at Kouphota, Agia Photia (Warren 1972; Zois 1976; 1980; Tsipopoulou 1988). At Myrtos-Pyrgos, a paved road (more than 20 m long) was laid along the western side of the settlement, overlying the EM II remains, while at the south end, the road opened into a paved courtyard (Georgoulaki 1996: 85). In addition, the paved 40×15 m large public court at Gournia has been dated to the end of the Prepalatial period (Damiani-Indelicato 1984: 53). Interestingly, from the middle stages of the EBA onwards, the large sites of Knossos, Malia and

Phaistos also provide evidence for large-scale building operations and terracing aiming at the provision and elaboration of open spaces in the areas where the so-called Old Palaces later stood (Pelon 1992; Wilson 1994; Todaro and Di Tonto 2008).

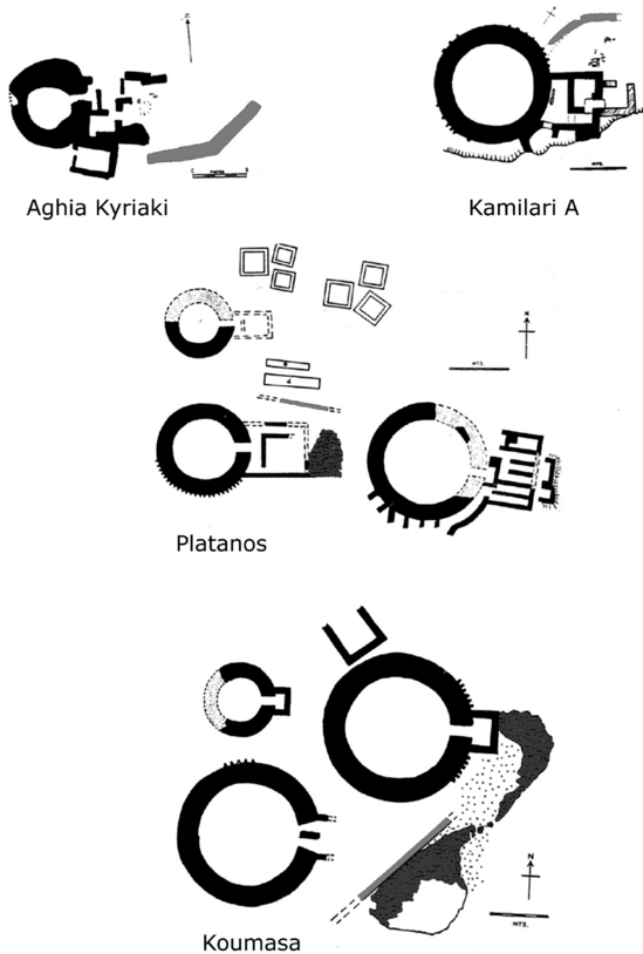


Figure 30.5. *Tholoi* associated with enclosure walls (light grey) and/or paved areas (dark grey) (adapted from Branigan 1993) (Catapoti).

Despite the fact that open areas were contexts where a wide array of diverse activities and experiences would normally cluster, it is particularly noteworthy that they all seem to have served as meeting points for the (regular?)

organisation of collective consumption events. Already from the middle stages of the EBA, empirical support to the foregoing premise is offered not only from the sheer quantities of eating and drinking paraphernalia reported from the open areas of large-scale sites such as Knossos (Wilson and Day 1999; 2000), but also from the concern to sustain a surplus of such vessels for outdoor social events in small-scale settlements, such as Myrtos-Phournou Koryfi (Catapoti 2005; see also Tenwolde 1992).

Around the same time, large concentrations of ceramic shapes such as drinking vessels (mainly conical cups), jugs, plates and/or bowls have been discovered in several cemeteries (Walberg 1987; Branigan 1993; Georgoulaki 1996). These discoveries have been linked with ritual ceremonies that most likely involved communal consumption, as well as the performance of other forms of embodied practice such as dancing (Branigan 1991; 1993; Hamilakis 1998). While it is not possible to specify whether these sets of practices were part of the funerary ceremony or commemorative rites, we could suggest nonetheless that the labour invested in the formalisation of areas outside the tombs points to a concern for creating a place imbued with special value and meaning.

Although several recent studies have portrayed the aforementioned commensality acts as technologies of social distinction and elite status legitimisation (Moody 1987; Hamilakis 1998; Day and Wilson 2002; Macdonald and Knappett 2007), the extant body of empirical information does not confirm in any way that the hosting of such events was a privilege shared by groups of exclusive membership. Instead, their organisation as outdoor events in a variety of diverse contexts seems to strengthen the possibility that they constituted a collective responsibility or a rotated obligation (Catapoti 2005). The latter hypothesis appears to be a highly plausible scenario, particularly with regard to the evidence from the funerary sector. If the duty to officiate the ritual was indeed accorded to those who had an affinal relationship to the deceased, then perhaps the serving of food and drink in the course of the funerary rite was a task

also undertaken by the same group.

These transformations mark a fundamental shift in the ways whereby unity and collectiveness would have been perceived and, by extension, materialised by Cretan communities of the late third millennium BC. If the early EBA was a period during which belonging was sought through reference to distance, the late stages of the third millennium BC mark a shift of emphasis towards proximity. The strategic elevation of open spaces into symbols of togetherness, as well as ‘centres of gravity’ (Peperaki 2010), and the simultaneous prominence of commensality practices in these contexts bring to the fore (once again) the issue of intimacy. Under these circumstances, the communal sharing of food and drink could have been highlighted ‘as a strategy employed in creating and sustaining “consubstantiality” (i.e. the sharing of substance), which is the essence to relatedness’ (Peperaki 2010: 254).

The tendency to elevate in importance (and, in a way, institutionalise) face-to-face relations may be further exemplified by the attempt to establish a closer spatial association between cemetery and settlement, and at times even delineate the boundaries of the living community. For instance, in the Mesara, there are numerous examples of settlements that appear to belong to a much later date than the tombs with which they are found associated (Xanthoudides 1924). Surveys conducted in Ayiofarango, the area of Moni Odigitrias and the south coast of the Asterousia range provide further empirical support to this pattern (Blackman and Branigan 1975: 35–36; Blackman 1977: 41; Vasilakis 1989–90: 72; 1995: 71; Alexiou 1992: 164). The effects of the close association established between settlements and cemeteries at the time may be appreciated more fully in the case of rectangular funerary structures, i.e. the house tombs. As the very term indicates, house tombs have close parallels in domestic architecture and were constructed along the lines of real houses (Soles 1992a: 202). In these cases, the connection between cemetery and settlement is established not only through spatial proximity but also through symbolisms at the level of morphology and

architectural expression, thus making it impossible to draw a boundary between the two domains merely on the grounds of external appearance. It is noteworthy, in that respect, that even in areas not commonly associated with the house-tomb tradition (such as the Mesara), the extensive use of rectangular funerary buildings (Xanthoudides 1924) may be pointing to a more broadly shared concern over blurring the morphological distinction established between the domestic and the funerary sphere.

Conclusions

The main aim of this chapter was to demonstrate that funerary transformations taking place on the island of Crete during the third millennium BC may be assessed with reference to processes pertinent to the island as a whole. Rather than seeking to provide an understanding of these processes through the investigation of regional or other localised readings, I have argued that there are grounds to suggest that all these heterogeneous dynamics appear to converge at the level of principle (Table 30.2).

Table 30.2. *Changing perceptions of ‘belonging’ during the third millennium BC in Crete.*

Early third millennium BC	Late third millennium BC
Ancestral body	Close kin
Integration	Compartmentalisation
Restricted access	Rotated obligation
Consumed	Consuming
Closure/mystification	Openness/demystification
Absence	Presence

The proposed interpretive scenario, arguing in favour of an ontological shift of emphasis from the imagined to the face-to-face, may in fact provide a novel perspective to our historical question, i.e. the marked visibility and subsequent invisibility of funerary *loci* within the wider Cretan

landscape shortly before the construction of the so-called palaces. The rich fabric of meaning accorded to (and generated by) the notions of openness and presence may also be confirmed by the information we currently have at our disposal regarding the morphology and layout of the early palaces (Driessen 2004; Schoep 2004). Not only do ‘courts’ constitute a cardinal feature of the monumental structures at Knossos, Phaistos and Malia (Schoep 2004), but as Driessen (2004) has rightly pointed out, there is an obvious connection (if not direct association) between these courts and the open spaces reported from preceding phases, at least in terms of location and orientation. However, it has been repeatedly advocated over the past few years that, throughout their history, these monumental structures accommodated large-scale consumption events (Hamilakis 1996; 1999). To see the EBA/MBA transition under those terms suggests that the ‘palace’ does not represent an architectural novelty or a new type of social organisation, but instead a *monument*, whose morphological and functional character served as a memory device, a mechanism of reiteration of broadly shared values concerning groupness and collective identification, whose roots ought to be traced in the workings of the late stages of the third millennium BC. Whoever used or made claim to this structure (be that a king, an elite or several competing groups) would have adhered to the rules of a broadly decipherable and highly prominent way of seeing and being in the world: in this respect, if the ‘palace’ constitutes a representation of some kind, then this representation would have to be one of shared ontology and not exclusive power (Bell 1992: 129).

Acknowledgements

I owe a special debt of thanks to Bernard Knapp and Peter van Dommelen for inviting me to contribute a chapter to this volume. I am also grateful to Maria Relaki, Giorgos Vavouranakis and Yannis Papadatos for their insightful comments on earlier versions of this paper. Many thanks are also due to Kostas Vrakatselis, Vasilis Tzavaras, Emma

Wager and Michalis Catapotis for their practical help and support. Responsibility for any remaining errors is entirely my own.

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31 From the Nineteenth Century to the Twenty-First: Understanding the Bronze Age Argaric Lifecourse in the Mediterranean ‘Far West’

Sandra Montón-Subías

Abstract

The El Argar culture, spanning the years 2200–1500 Cal BC in southeastern Iberia’s Bronze Age, is one of the best-known prehistoric periods in the western Mediterranean. Ever since it was discovered at the end of the nineteenth century, continuous research has amassed enough information to provide a fairly detailed description of its main characteristics. Although from different perspectives, most traditional accounts usually have been based on macro-scalar approaches to the analysis and interpretation of its socio-economic dynamics. While the relevance of all such previous research cannot be denied or downplayed, I argue here that it is perhaps time to adopt new insights to interpret the Argaric archaeological record. In tune with this idea, recent approaches to social and personal identity, based on a reassessment of the mortuary record, are presented in this chapter. Most specifically, I focus on recent works reevaluating the warlike nature of El Argar, revealing the importance of their funerary, commensality practices, as well as daily management and maintenance activities. All the examples presented here highlight the role of funerary behaviour in identity formation and the expression of social bonds and allegiances.

Introduction

In 1997, I attended the first Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology (in Edinburgh, Scotland). Although I enjoyed the experience tremendously, I felt like a traveller from a remote land in the Far West when I saw that no one else was reading a paper on the Iberian Peninsula. Remembering a line from Mario Benedetti's poem – 'the south does also exist' – I felt compelled to claim that, in the Mediterranean context, the west did also exist.

Since then, the situation has been changing gradually, and although in Anglo-American archaeology 'Mediterranean' still refers largely to the eastern and – to a lesser extent – central Mediterranean (Papadopoulos and Leventhal 2003; Alcock and Cherry 2004), the use of the term has now begun to encompass other zones farther west (Blake and Knapp 2005; Osborne and Cunliffe 2005; Broodbank 2009; 2013). Such is the case with the present volume on the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Mediterranean.

The editors have not only shown some daring by enlarging the geographical scope of what was formerly (and narrowly) understood as 'Mediterranean', they have also included and co-ordinated a multiplicity of approaches and academic traditions represented by native scholars from different Mediterranean countries. On a personal note, I must finally say that it is an honour for me to contribute to this project on a society that flourished in a corner of the western Mediterranean during the second millennium BC: the El Argar culture.

The Argaric culture spans the time period 2200–1500 Cal BC, corresponding to the Bronze Age in the southeastern areas of the Iberian Peninsula. Surrounded by the *Bronce Valenciano* to the northeast, *Bronce de la Mancha* to the north and *Bronce de las Campiñas* and *Baja Andalucía* to the west, El Argar covers more or less the extended areas of Murcia, Almería, Granada, Jaén and Alicante (Figure 31.1).

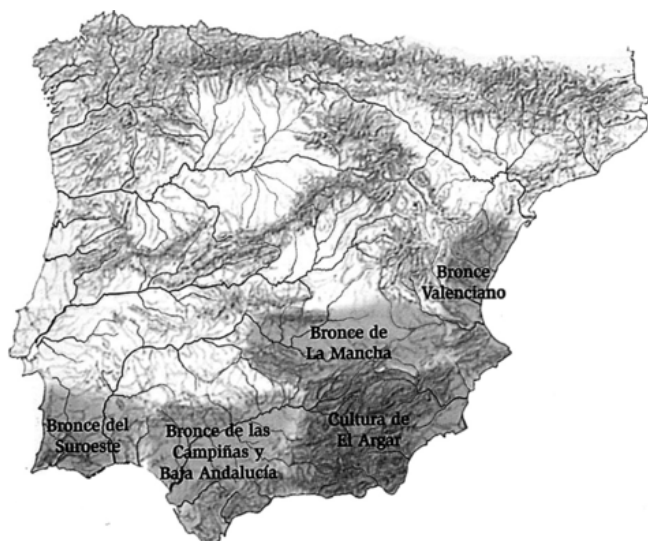


Figure 31.1. Map of El Argar culture (from Contreras *et al.* 1997).

Argaric culture became known as the result of fieldwork first carried out in the area by the Siret brothers at the end of the nineteenth century. Since that time, continuous research has delineated the characteristics of Argaric culture on the basis of three main features: a specific settlement pattern, a unique burial rite and certain kinds of metal and ceramic objects. In different ways, most traditional accounts have usually approached the study of socio-economic phenomena from a macro-scalar perspective. Population and agrarian production increase, technological advances and warfare and military conquest have been the main issues studied in the dynamics of Argaric society; little attention has been paid to the materialisation of these previous trends at the level of specific human actions and experiences.

In what follows, first I briefly go over traditional accounts of Argaric culture. I then turn to more recent developments in research on the mortuary record that question long-established assumptions, examine hitherto unstudied practices and open up new avenues for interpretation and analysis. From the works arising from recent research, I review some that focus on the re-evaluation of the warlike

nature of Argaric societies, then assess studies of commensality rituals in funerals and, finally, examine works dealing with daily maintenance activities.

Traditional Accounts of El Argar Culture

As already mentioned, ever since the earliest works on El Argar culture were published, this prehistoric society has been defined conventionally on the basis of a set of archaeological elements, including specific settlement patterns, particular burial rites, as well as metal and pottery wares of a certain kind. Without doubt one of the greatest merits of the Siret brothers' seminal work was to lay the foundations for, and establish the main lines of, all subsequent research. From their 1890 book, there emerges a picture of an advanced metallurgical society with a defensive/warlike nature. The social structure comprised different classes led by a warrior elite that emerged from the need to defend metallurgical resources, most specifically silver (Siret and Siret 1890: 104, 109, 207, 324, 328, 332). All this was manifest at the archaeological level through such features as the occupation of defensible locations, the presence of intra-settlement burials and the emergence of specialised weaponry.

In those early years, tombs and some of the funerary offerings attracted most attention, probably because of the rather peculiar location of burials inside the settlements, usually within dwelling structures, in spaces meant to 'house' both the living and the dead. According to the Siret brothers, Argaric people felt their dead also needed protection from invaders. This represents an important change with respect to the previous period, when the dead were buried in cemeteries of collective tombs outside the settlement. Recent research has however shown that some earlier funerary sites outside settlements were also used in Argaric times (Aranda 2013).

Argaric burials consisted of single, double and, more rarely, triple and quadruple inhumations in cists, pits, urns and *covachas* (rock-cut tombs), with bodies usually in a

flexed position. In some very exceptional cases, as many as seven skeletons have been found inside the same tomb (Rihuete *et al.* 2011). Bodies were often found with a series of objects that represented the funerary offering. Grave goods were different in number, variety and quality. In fact, burials range from tombs with no grave goods to graves with an important accumulation of funerary furniture.

With respect to the evaluation of funerary offerings, two common lines of research have predominated. First, the material characteristics of the objects were studied from a typological and chronological point of view, broadly developed from the end of the nineteenth century to the 1970s (Siret and Siret 1890; Cuadrado 1950; Blance 1971; Schubart 1975). Second, from the 1980s onwards, scholars have examined patterns in which such objects appear in the tombs, palaeopathologies, activity patterns and spatial relations among different burials as a base from which to infer socio-economic aspects. Following this second line, a strongly stratified society, composed of different classes, has been proposed (Gilman 1976; Lull 1983; 2000; Molina 1983; Lull and Estévez 1986; Contreras *et al.* 1987–88; 1995; Arteaga 1993; Contreras 2000; Cámara 2001; Chapman 2003; Aranda and Molina 2006). Some authors have even defended the idea of an early state society (Lull and Estévez 1986; Schubart and Arteaga 1986; Lull and Risch 1995; Lull 2000; Cámara 2001; Chapman 2003; Aranda and Molina 2006; Lull and Micó 2007), while others have opposed such an interpretation (Gilman 1999).

Argaric settlements also show clear signs of social differences. As a general rule, Argaric sites tend to be strategically located in mountains and hills with natural defensive features and a commanding view of the surrounding area (Figure 31.2). In addition, scholarship has pointed out that some of these sites were also fortified by the construction of diverse and complex defensive structures such as stone walls, towers, bastions, forts, and stone enclosures protecting the higher areas of the settlements, as well as those with easier access. Although not in dominant numbers, sites located in low-lying areas of no strategic,

defensive concern have also been documented (Ayala 1991; Fontenla *et al.* 2005), which has led some to believe they might be in confederacy with the settlements on the hills (Ayala 1986: 329). In addition, there were minor sites, also on hilltops, with specialised economic activities such as metal production or cereal processing and storage (Contreras 2000; Risch 2002). Thus, differences between settlements are quite obvious, not only concerning their location, but also in terms of size, material culture and the relative weight of different production activities carried on within them. These differences have all been mobilised as evidence to suggest there was a hierarchical and territorially structured settlement pattern, wherein different sites had specialised strategic, social and/or economic functions and interdependent relationships.



Figure 31.2. View of the Argaric site of Fuente Álamo (Almería) (from Schubart and Arteaga 1983).

Expanding the same interpretations suggested by the study of tombs, some scholars believe the sociopolitical structure of Argaric territorial organisation corresponds to a state-level society. Such a state would have emerged gradually owing to increasing social differentiation resulting from the growing importance of mining and metallurgy as compared with earlier periods (see, e.g., Lull 1983; Schubart and Arteaga 1986). At the economic level, the correlate of increasing social complexity would be the growth of cereal

agriculture, mining and metallurgy. Agricultural production would be based on barley and – to a lesser degree – on legumes, complemented by livestock, mostly sheep, goat and cattle (Castro *et al.* 1999; Chapman 2008).

There is currently an ongoing debate regarding the economic and sociopolitical importance of mining and metallurgy (Montero and Murillo 2010; Moreno and Contreras 2010). Some scholars downplay the major role traditionally attributed to metalworking within the Argaric economy (Gilman 1976; Montero 1993; 1994). The fact that different settlements exploited different mineral resources according to local availability, the paucity of metal items that have been recovered, along with evidence suggesting that in most settlements metalworking processes were independently completed *on site*, all lend support to the idea of self-sufficient operations conducted at each location on a part-time basis. Lead-isotope analyses, however, indicate a non-local origin of raw materials. This evidence, along with other factors such as unequal access to metal tools in different zones, and the discovery of two copper ingots at Peñalosa, a site that seems to have specialised in metal production, suggest to other scholars a congruency with traditional explanatory ideas. These ideas accorded pre-eminence to metallurgy within an increasingly complex Argaric economy, and defended the hypothesis of specialised, large-scale mining operations carried out by full-time craft specialists (Contreras 2000; Lull 2000; Stos-Gale 2000; Delgado and Risch 2006).

While the importance of previous research cannot be denied, in what follows, I focus on recent works that, besides contributing to a general reassessment of traditional interpretations, are also opening new lines of enquiry regarding gender, age, social practices and identity (Sánchez Romero 2004; 2007; Aranda and Esquivel 2006; 2007; Alarcón 2007; Montón-Subías 2007; 2010a; Aranda *et al.* 2009a; 2009b; Aranda and Montón-Subías 2011).

The Warlike Nature of Argaric Society

The re-evaluation of conventional interpretations is

exemplified by some recent studies that cast doubt on traditional assumptions about the allegedly structural or endemic nature of warfare in Argaric society (Aranda *et al.* 2009a). According to the dominant research paradigm, Argaric society's increasing complexity would be correlated with the increase and institutionalisation of warfare, as materialised in the emergence of an aristocratic warrior elite. In common with similar examples throughout Europe, however, the emergence of warriors and warfare has been asserted rather than explained.

There are two main sources of archaeological evidence that allegedly illustrate the warlike nature of Argaric society: the emergence of specialised weaponry (halberds and swords) and the very characteristics of Argaric settlements in relation to their location and some of their structures, interpreted as defensive (Siret and Siret 1890; Cuadrado 1950; Schubart 1973; Gilman 1976; Molina 1983; Castro *et al.* 1993–94; Contreras *et al.* 1995). But while a great deal of attention has been devoted to the typological study of weaponry, the warlike nature of El Argar society has been assumed without considering the evidence provided by the scale of production, use wear in metal weapons and traumas in skeletal bodies. All of these are deemed fundamental for clarifying and contrasting traditional assumptions.

Specialised Weaponry

Without exception, all well-provenanced halberds and swords have been recovered from tombs, where they were deposited as grave goods. Interestingly, since the beginnings of Argaric research, these weapons typically have been noted in adult male burials that contain the most striking accumulation of wealth and symbolic items (Castro *et al.* 1993–94) (Figure 31.3). Both types of object are regarded as possessing the highest social value among the funerary objects (Lull and Estevez 1986). Consequently, social position, gender and age would have determined access to halberds and swords. Research based on radiocarbon dating, however, seems to indicate that the weapons were not contemporary and that halberds were superseded by swords

around 1800 Cal BC (Castro *et al.* 1993–94).



Figure 31.3. Grave goods from tomb 9 in Fuente Álamo (after Siret and Siret 1890).

Nonetheless, only a handful of Argaric adult males were buried with them: we have just around 50 halberds and 13 swords according to the latest studies for the entire Argaric period (Brandherm 2003). This highly restricted access to specialised weapons stands in contrast to the more widespread occurrence of other metalwork. According to Montero (1993; 1994), weapons only represent 1.7% of the metal products and less than 10% weight of the total estimated metalwork for the whole Argaric period, which

was mainly targeted at the manufacture of tools and ornaments. It can therefore be argued that specialised weaponry had a rather low impact on Argaric metal production.

It is worth clarifying here that, other than their actual weapons, no distinctive features identify the men found in Argaric tombs as warriors. We are not dealing here with anything resembling the well-known warrior tombs with standardised warrior assemblages that characterise later European developments (Kristiansen 1999; Harrison 2004; Harding 2007). The available facts do not support conventional assumptions on the use of those weapons. Evidence of use wear, for example, is virtually absent in swords and can only be observed in a rather small percentage of halberds (Brandherm 2003). In the latter, wear damage in the shape of notches and gaps on the edges is usually concentrated on the inner edge, in the area immediately below the hilt mark; this distribution of wear marks is repeated in a number of pieces (Brandherm 2003). Given the limited size of the overall sample, however, caution is required in interpreting this peculiar pattern. In addition, available analyses on the wood of sword hilts tend to question their suitability for actual combat (Hernández 1990; Carrión *et al.* 2002). In view of all this, it is difficult to imagine a context of generalised interpersonal violence where swords and halberds would have played a decisive role (Aranda *et al.* 2009a).

Skeletal Remains

Evidence for wounds found in archaeological skeletons has not been examined systematically in the Argaric record. Only recently have analyses at the University of Granada's Laboratory of Physical Anthropology addressed this question (Botella *et al.* 1995; Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 1995). It is true that episodes of violence in the past may have outnumbered those of which we are aware from the picture conveyed by human bones. For instance, lethal wounds do not always have an impact on bones, nor do we always have complete and well-preserved archaeological bodies, or can we always

recover skeletons of people who died in violent encounters far away from their home villages (Milner 1999; Vencl 1999; Osgood *et al.* 2000; Walker 2001; Vankilde 2003). Even so, osteological lesions provide crucial data on violent social behavior in prehistoric societies, as is demonstrated by analysis of a sample of 155 skeletons, whose results showed how cranial traumatism might have had an intentional purpose (Aranda *et al.* 2009a).

In this example, 12 people – 10 males and 2 females – had suffered cranial injuries. Significantly, all of them were adults, mature or elderly. Except for three cases, the lesions consisted of impressions or depressed fractures in the outer deck of the cranial vault (Figure 31.4). All of them were *ante-mortem* cranial injuries possibly resulting from direct impacts, and showed clear signs of healing. In terms of sexual differences, male skeletons exhibit a statistically significant higher occurrence of injuries as compared to female ones (Aranda *et al.* 2009a: 1045).



Figure 31.4. Cranial traumatism from the Argaric site of Castellón Alto (after Aranda *et al.* 2009a).

The shape of the cranial lesions also showed a high degree of standardisation. Seventy-nine per cent of the injuries were circular or oval-shaped, measuring around 20 mm. Depending on the impact, the depressed fractures could be more or less severe (ranging from 0.5–4 mm). These were most commonly located in the frontal (57.9%) and the

parietal areas (21%), and there was a higher incidence on the right (57.9%) versus the left side (31.6%). Again, all these differences were highly significant from a statistical point of view, which means that there is probably a non-random explanation for the higher rate of injuries on the right side of the cranial vault's frontal area (Aranda *et al.* 2009a: 1046).

The previous evidence is consistent with hand-to-hand fighting episodes, and suggests that the injuries may have been caused by a variety of different blunt implements. Ethnographic and archaeological parallels also indicate that practices of this sort, hitherto unexamined for the Argaric world, usually take place in a context of ritualised or highly regulated resolution of violent conflicts, with few or no fatalities (Walker 1989; 2001; Turney-High 1991; Robb 1997; Wilkinson 1997; Schulting and Wysocki 2002; Guilaine and Zammit 2005; Arkush and Allen 2006; Solometo 2006). It must be emphasised that no evidence of sharp injuries has been found in the analysed sample, nor is it even mentioned in other paleoanthropological reports (Buikstra *et al.* 1999; Contreras *et al.* 2000; Kunter 2000; López-Padilla *et al.* 2006). Only Siret and Siret (1890: 184–85) reported a skull with signs of a dart injury from tomb 654 at El Argar, and Cloquell and Aguilar (1996) found a child's skull with a sword injury at Caramoro. Both the cause of the wound and even the identification of this latter site as Argaric, however, remain open to question. Whatever role swords and halberds may have played in actual combat engagements, their imprints on bones are non-existent. Furthermore, evidence of violence-related mortality is also absent in the archaeological record, since no bodies with lethal injuries have ever been found.

We could probably learn a great deal more if the relevant anthropological evidence were reanalysed. We could establish whether males buried with specialised weaponry were also affected by cranial lesions, and whether that particular form of trauma can be found in other Argaric areas. According to the data reviewed, it seems undeniable that violence, in one form or another, was indeed present

during the Argaric period. Its specific character, however, is not so clear. Although we have fortification systems and specialised weaponry, halberds and swords appear in very low quantities, and while evidence of trauma in skeletons may indicate that lesions were caused intentionally, that same evidence cannot be related to the sharp weapons under discussion.

As in many other cases within European prehistory, the Argaric archaeological record does not at present provide us with enough information to visualise thoroughly the different forms adopted by violence. As already mentioned, the prevailing assumptions about the existence of warriors and warfare have not been subject to intense scholarly debate, nor an in-depth search for supporting archaeological evidence. In the light of the available data, it seems clear that a single interpretation cannot account for the conditions and circumstances under which warlike practices occurred. Different archaeological evidence – architectonic defences, cranial traumata and specialised weaponry – point to different categories of violence and, therefore, to different scales, social costs, forms of combat, levels of inter- or intra-group conflict, social causes and social consequences. Thus, the scholarly debates on the nature, conditions and dimensions of warfare, or about its social scale, frequency, duration and consequences, remain to be developed (Aranda *et al.* 2009a).

Funerary Endowments and Commensality Rituals

Recent research trends also include studies of Argaric commensality practices linked to funerary rites (Aranda and Esquivel 2006; 2007; Sánchez Romero *et al.* 2007; Aranda 2008; Aranda and Montón-Subías 2011). The study of feasting and commensality in prehistoric societies has recently become prominent in the wake of theorisation of the topic in anthropology (Wiessner and Schiefenhövel 1996; Gosden and Hather 1999; Dietler and Hayden 2001; Parker 2003; Pollock 2003; Smith 2003; Halstead and Barret 2004; Hayden 2009; Aranda *et al.* 2011). There are two

major sources of evidence for the study of Argaric funerary commensality practices: (1) pottery wares explicitly manufactured for ritual use; and (2) animal bones found in burials, the latter regarded as the remains of meat served at the funerary banquet, where the deceased would also be a symbolic guest.

Commensal Pottery

Pottery of very specific morphological and technological characteristics, not found in other contexts, has been recovered from Argaric funerary endowments. Besides being heavily standardised, these wares comprise mostly vessels that can be seen to have been used for serving and consuming food: carinated vessels, as well as bowls of different depths and platters which, because of their relatively open shapes, allow for easy access to their contents. Other new shapes, such as cups – hitherto without precedents in the archaeological record of southeastern Iberian prehistory – have also been found. Their morphology and residue analysis suggest that they were specifically used for the consumption of beverages. Globe or egg-shaped bottles with a sharply defined neck have been found as well, along with lens-shaped and carinated vessels. Precisely because of their shapes, access to the contents of these types of jars is obviously more difficult, but preservation is greatly improved, as the evaporation rate is lower. As for bottles, the curved shape of their lips would make the pouring of liquids much easier. All these morphological features seem to have been designed for the small-scale storage of liquids (Aranda and Esquivel [2006](#)).

Other technological patterns also suggest that these vessels may have been intended as showpieces. As a matter of fact, the most salient feature of some of the ceramic wares in the mortuary rituals is that they are made to be conspicuously displayed and observed. This is evident from the very fine clays and heavily burnished surfaces with a typically metal finish, and is further corroborated by the fact that some of the pieces were fired at low temperatures, a method that yields pottery unfit for frequent everyday use ([Figure 31.5](#)).

The shapes of these vessels are moreover rather stylised compared to those found outside funerary contexts, which means that visual properties were selected over practical ones such as durability or stability (Aranda and Esquivel 2006).



Figure 31.5. Burnished Argaric pottery.

The above-mentioned features of funerary vessels, however, are not homogeneously distributed; on the contrary, they can only be found in the richest tombs, where endowments comprise items of great social value, e.g. weapons, tools and decorative objects made of copper, silver and gold. In the tombs of people of a lower social standing, by contrast, the pottery wares are morphologically and technologically indistinguishable from those used in everyday life. These differences in Argaric funerary furnishings suggest certain vessels were exclusively manufactured for their use in elite commensality rituals.

Meat for Death

Regarding the animal bones that are found in tombs, it must be pointed out that faunal remains in Argaric burials have hitherto received scant attention. Although the study of mortuary behaviour, and most specifically of the furniture deposited in tombs, has always been privileged over other

lines of enquiry in the study of Argaric communities, faunal remains have traditionally been overlooked. Their significance has been largely ignored despite their recurrent presence in tombs, and despite the fact that they were mentioned already by the Siret brothers (1890: 169, 250), and were also noticed in later research (Molina *et al.* 1984: 355, 358; Carrasco and Pachón 1984: 369; Ayala 1986: 338). With few exceptions, animal bones recovered from tombs were evaluated as integral parts of the general zooarchaeological sample, but deemed irrelevant to the understanding of funerary behaviour.

This oversight is not out of place in the context of the history of Argaric research. Initially devoted to defining the distribution and chronology of the newly discovered culture, early studies favoured a typological approach to material culture that privileged pottery and metal funerary gifts. Later theories of Argaric social structures were also based on the study of funerary pottery and metalware. Only in recent years have faunal remains and socio-ideological practices received the attention they deserve as a result of a better understanding of the decisions made by the living about where, how and with which objects to bury the dead (Aranda and Esquivel 2007; Sánchez Romero *et al.* 2007; Aranda 2008; Aranda and Montón-Subías 2011).

Interestingly enough, faunal remains are common in El Argar burials, as 35–40% of tombs contain such remains. This allows us to infer that commensal celebrations were an important part of Argaric mortuary practices; possibly the living deposited bones in the tombs to represent symbolically the participation of the deceased in the ritual.

Such practices, as seen above with respect to the pottery, were highly standardised. Offerings consisted of high-quality meat cuts from the limbs (tibiae, femuræ, humeræ, ulnae and radii) of bovines (40.3%) and ovicaprines (59.6%) of usually non-adult ages (74.4%). Other domestic (pig 1.7%; horse 1.7%) and wild species (deer 3.5%) hardly feature in burials. With rare exceptions, only the remains of a single species and a single animal are introduced in each particular tomb (86%). Although more taphonomic data on cooking

and butchery patterns are required, the presence of some limbs in anatomical connection (tibiae with astragalus and/or calcaneus, and a humerus with radius and ulna) indicates that they were deposited in tombs as complete pieces of meat (whether cooked or raw is unknown).

Remains of bovines have been found only in elite adult burials, while ovicaprines turn up in the graves of children below 12 years of age and of adults in lower social positions. It is also worth noting that the funerary offerings of a very small number of burials included beef but not the other objects typically associated with the social elite.

In contrast with other deposition patterns, no gender-related significance has been detected in the distribution of faunal remains, since ovicaprines and bovines can be found in similar quantities in both male and female burials. Argaric commensal ritual practices, therefore, showed specific features that varied only in accordance with the age and social status of the deceased. From all the above, we may deduce that there was a norm, cutting across all of Argaric geography and history, that dictated how such rituals were to be conducted (Sánchez Romero *et al.* 2007).

In accordance with ethnographic data from different societies, we may assume that commensal rituals celebrated as part of mortuary practices in Argaric culture had various meanings and contributed to reinforcing ideologies of power and collective identity. Without doubt, in communities characterised by social inequality, such rituals would ideologically legitimise and naturalise social differences to the advantage of the dominant social sectors, while at the same time promoting feelings of cohesion and social belonging. In brief, social cohesion and social distance, inequality and social exclusion may have been two sides of the same ritual coin. The small number of burials with ovicaprine instead of bovine bones moreover suggests that commensal rituals at funerals offered ideal occasions for social conflict and provided opportunities that might have been seized upon by groups seeking social promotion (Aranda and Esquivel 2007; Aranda 2008; Aranda and Montón-Subías 2011).

By way of conclusion, we may safely infer that commensal practices probably served a variety of objectives: on the one hand they created a sense of communal belonging, but on the other hand, they enabled politico-ideological mechanisms to display and legitimise social inequalities and distances, and sometimes to negotiate and even contest them.

Everyday Life Management and Maintenance Activities in the Funerary Record

We have already argued above how in Argaric culture the way the living dealt with the dead expressed the group's social identity and their perception of the deceased. But before considering recent research on everyday life management and maintenance activities, I should perhaps clarify – for those who are unfamiliar with the term – the concept of *maintenance activities*, which emerged in Spanish feminist archaeology in the 1990s (González-Marcén *et al.* 2008) and remains in widespread use there today (Montón-Subías and Sánchez Romero 2008). Initially catalysed by gendered archaeological challenges to correct ‘the appalling absence of concepts that tap women’s experience’ (Conkey and Gero 1991: 3), the notion of maintenance activities encompasses a set of practices that involve the sustenance, welfare and effective reproduction of all the members of a social group. These comprise the basic tasks of daily life that regulate and stabilise social life. They mainly involve care giving, feeding and food processing, weaving and cloth manufacture, hygiene, public health and healing, socialisation of children and the fitting out and organisation of related spaces (for similar ideas, see Bray 1997; Allison 1999; Meyers 2003).

Such activities always entail specialised knowledge and the ability to sustain networks of interpersonal relationships in which they take place. The concept of maintenance activities thus refers to the basic tasks that regulate both the course of human life and social stability on a daily basis; they are

therefore crucial for the reproduction, cohesion and welfare of human groups. Associated with specific technological practices and with the existing social values and norms, their ultimate function is to guarantee the possible reiteration and recurrence of group activities, and to channel any changes in the latter into new forms of everyday life management (González-Marcén *et al.* 2008).

Recent studies of El Argar culture have begun to engage with this field of enquiry and, more specifically, with the materiality of activities associated with learning, childcare, socialisation practices and the construction of self-identity (Sánchez Romero 2004; 2007; 2008; Montón-Subías 2007; 2010a; Aranda *et al.* 2009b; Alarcón and Sánchez Romero 2010).

Argaric Children: Learning and Socialisation Processes

Teaching children how to deal with their social environment is essential for the sustainability of that environment itself across time. Socialisation processes guarantee the transmission of cultural, technological and symbolic patterns. But the study of such processes in the Argaric world remains largely underdeveloped. Scholars' lack of interest in maintenance activities is here compounded with their traditional disregard for the study of children in prehistoric societies – a field that has branched off from feminist and gender archaeologies and is thereby gaining increasing relevance (e.g. Lillehammer 1989; Moore and Scott 1997; Sofaer-Derevinski 2000; Baxter 2005; Dommasnes and Wrigglesworth 2008).

Children's burials in the Argaric world have received increasing attention from scholars who hold two different albeit interrelated perspectives. Inspired by a Marxist perspective, research is focused on economic inequalities in Argaric society, and specifically uses evidence from children's burials to investigate whether social differences were hereditary (Lull *et al.* 2004). Evident social differences in burials of children six years of age and above lay bare the

arrangements for the hereditary, unequal transmission of private property in the Argaric world.

The other approach to the study of children's burials focuses on maintenance activities. This perspective is mainly concerned with gathering data on learning and socialisation processes, and on the social identity of Argaric children (Sánchez Romero 2004; 2007; 2008). In this line of research, the archaeological record at Cerro de la Encina (Monachil, Granada; see Aranda and Molina 2006) is of special importance. Argaric pottery is highly standardised, and it follows well-defined morphological, metrical and technological patterns (although there are exceptions to this general rule; see, e.g., Colomer 2005; Montón-Subías 2010b). Some small, rather curious vessels found at Cerro de la Encina, however, seem to depart from the norm in terms of quality. Asymmetrical in form, with coarse temper and no surface treatment, they do not equal the high level of skill generally observed in Argaric wares, but instead look like a poor imitation, or the result of an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the manufacturers to replicate the canon.

No clear explanation for this 'substandard' type of vessel seemed plausible until more of them turned up in one of the site's tombs, where two children had been buried. This finding led Sánchez Romero (2007; 2008) to interpret the untypical vessels as toys made by children during the learning process, while they were acquiring manufacturing skills. They illustrated how the children's socialisation process combined the spheres of production and play (Figure 31.6). Scholars such as Sánchez Romero also regard the funerary record as a source of further information on children's socialisation processes, and believe Argaric burial rites should be re-evaluated from that perspective, given that the presence of different types of grave goods in children's tombs reflect differences that in all likelihood were also materialised in everyday life. Argaric children were probably aware – from a very early age – of their status, and conscious of everything that distinguished them from others.



Figure 31.6. Vessel of substandard finish found at the Argaric site of Cerro de la Encina (after Sánchez Romero 2004).

Maintenance Activities and the Formation of Gender Identity

The study of material culture in the funerary record, and most specifically in women's tombs, highlights the connection between maintenance activities and gender identity in Argaric communities (Montón-Subías 2007; 2010a; Aranda *et al.* 2009b). The performance of maintenance activities entails social actions implicated in the formation of self-identity; they create a specific range of social experiences, a specific experience of the human life cycle, and a specific relationship of the self in society, and encourage clearly defined abilities, qualities and responsibilities on the part of those who carry them out. This means that the people in charge of maintenance activities, who establish their personal identity through the daily practice of such activities, must have a particular, typically relational understanding of identity and personhood, which includes the way to interrelate with other members of the group (Montón-Subías 2010c).

As pointed out elsewhere (Montón-Subías 2007; 2010a; Aranda *et al.* 2009b), psychology, anthropology and communication studies have shown how personal identity is

forged by a variety of mechanisms (Geertz 1973; Markus and Kitayama 1998), two of which stand out as the most important. In some instances, ‘identity develops from social relationships, and those relationships with others actually constitute identity’, whereas in other cases ‘identity develops as the individual separates from primary relationships, and those features and experiences unique to him or her constitute identity’ (Kim 2001: 6). Although relationally and individually established forms of identity are each represented in groups with different understandings of selfhood and personhood, they can also coexist within the same social group, as Li Puma (2001) and Hernando (2002) have shown from anthropological and archaeological standpoints.

There are many items of material culture in Argaric tombs that were connected with maintenance activities. One particular object deserves special attention in my view: the awl, which is the only metal tool integrated into daily life activities that, with few exceptions, is found exclusively in female tombs (Figure 31.7). The presence of awls in the mortuary record cuts across time periods, funerary and non-funerary spaces, the subject’s age or social position ... *but not their gender*. In fact, among all the metal funerary objects associated with one sex, awls are the only ones that are present throughout the entire Argaric period. In male tombs, by contrast, exclusively metal items show more variability during the same span of time, although there are also items connected with maintenance activities in some male tombs.



Figure 31.7. Argaric awl from Rincón de Almendricos (after Ayala 1991).

In previous papers, I have advanced a possible interpretation for this situation, and connected the presence of the awl with the symbolical need to mark female identity

in the mortuary ritual (Montón-Subías 2007; 2010a; Aranda *et al.* 2009b). Following Hamlin (2001: 125), it may plausibly be assumed that when such a link between a tool and a particular sex can be shown, it is because that sex undertakes the activities performed with that tool. Until now, no analyses to ascertain the tasks performed with awls have been conducted, but following ethnographic and textual evidence, we may presume that awls were used in day-to-day production activities such as leather and wood tasks, textile and basketry manufacture, maintenance and reparation of certain objects, and so on (Spector 1993).

Studies conducted on Argaric skeletons further indicated possible differences between the activities carried out by men and women, as evidenced by two fundamental markers: arthrosis and musculo-skeletal stress (Jiménez-Brobeil and Ortega 1992; Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 1995; 2004; Al Oumaoui *et al.* 2004). The different incidence of arthrosis in men (38%) and women (25.9%) was not statistically significant at a general level. When specific joints or the axial skeleton were considered, however, the higher levels of arthrosis in the dorsal vertebrae, the shoulders and the feet in male skeletons reached statistical significance (Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 1995; 2004). The study of musculo-skeletal stress shows that men experienced greater muscular development that cannot be explained by sexual dimorphism; it was probably connected with intense physical activity and frequent walking, particularly on steep hilly areas, such as those where Argaric settlements are typically located (Al Oumaoui *et al.* 2004; Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 2004).

Bringing together these results, it seems likely that the patterns of men's and women's activities differed significantly during the Argaric period. Arthrosis affects those body parts that also show greater evidence of musculo-skeletal stress: dorsal vertebrae, shoulders and feet joints. This means that the development of arthrosis – at least in some joints – can be correlated with intense physical activities, a correlation that becomes all the more significant when all these markers show up in the same bodies.

Argaric women's lesser degree of mobility is consistent

with the fact that they were mainly in charge of daily life maintenance activities, and suggests a close association between women and the domestic domain. Consequently, and although I am aware of the level of speculation involved in such a claim, ‘symbolism expressed in tombs was congruent with the practices actually accomplished by Argaric women in everyday life’ (Aranda *et al.* 2009b: 154).

It can be said, by way of conclusion, that material culture – inasmuch as it was integrated into practices of everyday maintenance – acted as a signifier of female gender identity. Because of their connection with the management of everyday life, awls may have been selected to represent symbolically the dominant aspect of female identity in the funerary record. Female gender identity in the Argaric world was shaped by the sphere of maintenance activities, linked to specific networks of social relationships and to specific forms of social and temporal organisation.

Conclusions

The aim of this chapter has been twofold: first, to present a brief overview of conventional interpretations of Argaric society, and second, to review in some detail the most recent work in this field. As I have tried to show, analysis of the mortuary record casts new light on the allegedly warlike disposition of Argaric culture and opens up new lines of research on commensality practices and daily maintenance activities. Such studies may address topics such as the relationships between Argaric men, women and children, and suggest that the level of grand scholarly narratives should be combined with perspectives at the scale of more specific human actions and experiences.

As we have seen, recent studies indicate that traditional assumptions regarding a supposedly specialised warrior elite and the allegedly institutional nature of warfare in El Argar culture are no longer tenable in light of recent analytical evidence of specialised weaponry. The small number of weapons recovered, the traces of use wear in metal and the wood of sword hilts, and palaeoanthropological analyses of

trauma in human bones are incompatible with the conventional picture of a warlike culture. Although the existence of violence in Argaric society may seem undeniable in the light of much of the evidence, substantial questions about its specific form, conditions, scale, frequency, duration and social consequences remain unanswered.

There are also unanswered questions concerning the second topic reviewed in this chapter, which are commensality practices. Careful analysis of hitherto neglected evidence may shed more light on this issue, but current information already gives us a better understanding of ritual practices at Argaric funerals, and we can safely assume that, with respect to commensality, mortuary behaviour was also clearly regulated.

The third area of research discussed is that of so-called maintenance activities. As I have tried to show, the mortuary record offers evidence on a wide range of practices associated with the sustainability and reproduction of social groups and the symbolic status of their members at the moment of death.

These three areas of research indicate that mortuary behaviour formed an active part of social interactions in Argaric society. Mortuary rituals not only expressed personal and collective identities, but also helped to reproduce and negotiate them. They also established a reference framework for the members of the community through the deposition of items that may have served as emblems of high-ranked masculinity (such as halberds and swords), or through commensal rituals and items connected with maintenance activities. As we have seen, it is possible to express and create both social distance and proximity, social continuity and discontinuity through specific mortuary rituals. It is important to understand the two sides of these rituals because both derived from past human social actions and both inform us about people's identities and lives.

Acknowledgements

This chapter was written and accepted for publication in 2009. It has benefited from discussions with Gonzalo Aranda, Dirk Branherm, Margarita Sánchez Romero and Eva Alarcón. Any errors or shortcomings, however, are my own responsibility. This work has been made possible by support from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (Ref. HAR2009-07283), the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (Ref. HAR2012-31927) and the Catalan Agency for Research and Development (AGAUR, MIDARC-SGR 835).

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32 Crossing Borders: Death and Life in Second Millennium BC Southern Iberia and North Africa

Katina T. Lillios

Abstract

This chapter takes a macro-scale perspective of the mortuary record of the second millennium BC – the Early–Middle Bronze Age – of southern Iberia. It examines the archaeology of funerary monuments to inform our understanding of the cultural lives of people who lived in the southwest Mediterranean during this period. It engages with four premises: (1) the living and the dead are socially constituted, (2) bodies are sites of identity formation, (3) the transition from life to death is a highly ritualized and sometimes prolonged process, and (4) the dead shape the lives and identities of the living. It explores, drawing from the archaeological and bioarchaeological evidence for the second millennium BC, how the living materialized the dead, what we can assert about the lives of the dead, and how the dead may have structured the lives of the living. Finally, it assesses the interaction that may have occurred across the Strait of Gibraltar at this time. This chapter attempts to create bridges, not only between the worlds of the living and the dead but also between the archaeology of the Iberian southwest and the southeast and between southern Iberia and north Africa, during the second millennium BC.

Introduction

Crossing borders is a risky business. Whether these borders are national, linguistic, disciplinary, or epistemological, the perils of translation are enormous. When I accepted the editors' invitation to consider the Bronze Age – the second millennium BC – of southern Iberia and northern Africa for this volume, I hadn't envisioned the formidable challenge that awaited me. Not only did research involve articulating the archaeological literature of three countries (Portugal, Spain, and Morocco), with distinctive approaches to their archaeological past, it also involved engaging with these nations' entangled and often violent histories of conquest, colonialism, and immigration, and the ambivalence expressed in the archaeological literature toward the possibility of their interconnected prehistories. At various moments in the research for this chapter, swimming across the Strait of Gibraltar seemed less daunting than writing the chapter.

By shifting the analytical scale from archaeologies defined by national borders to archaeologies defined by shared geographies, we are provoked into asking new questions and generating new insights into the human cultural past. In this chapter, I consider three Bronze Age culture areas that are most commonly considered separately: the Iberian southwest, the southeast (also known as the Argaric), and north Africa ([Figure 32.1](#)). I devote the majority of this chapter to the Iberian Peninsula, since there is significantly less known about the second millennium BC of north Africa. In considering these areas together, we are forced to consider the role of the Mediterranean as a geographic space and an ecological regime, characterized by short periods of precipitation and long, hot, dry summers, in the development of societies in southern Iberia and north Africa during the second millennium BC. Despite variability in the ecologies of these three culture areas, one notes that north Africa and southeast Spain are more similar to each other (i.e., more arid and more mountainous) than to the Iberian southwest (Metzger *et al.* [2005](#)). A critical feature of the southwest Mediterranean, given its precarious water sources, is the role of climate change and its impact on human settlement and culture. Indeed, paleoecological research in

the southwestern Mediterranean, including fluvial and palynological studies, indicates dessication and cooling during the period under consideration, beginning around 2400 BC (Zielhofer *et al.* 2008). Radiometrically dated cave exposures in north Africa show a close correlation between chronological gaps and environmental changes during this period, though whether these are causally related or not remains to be investigated (Zielhofer *et al.* 2008: 52).

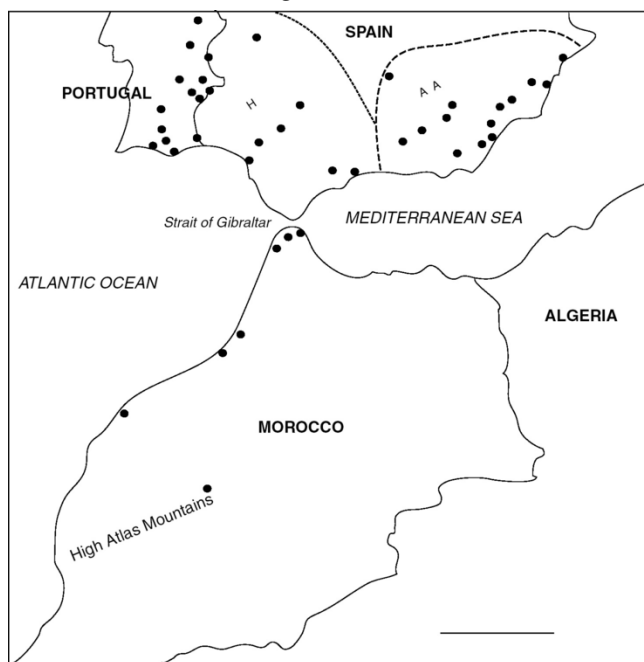


Figure 32.1. Sites discussed in text: 1. Estremoz 7, 2. Las Minitas, 3. Monte da Cabida 3, 4. Folha das Palmeiras, 5. Assento, 6. Belmeque, 7. Talha de Chaparrinho, 8. Herdade do Montinho, 9. Monte da Velha 1, 10. Atalaia, 11. Cerro do Malhão, 12. Alfarrobeira, 13. Vinha do Casão, 14. Ferradeira, 15. Alcaria do Pocinho, 16. Setefilla, 17. Chichina, 18. La Traviesa, 19. Las Palomas, 20. Peñalosa, 21. Tesorillo de la Llaná, 22. Llago de la Virgen, 23. Fuente Amarga, 24. Castellón Alto, 25. Cuesta del Negro, 26. Cerro de la Encina, 27. Illeta dels Banyets, 28. La Almoloya de Pliego, 29. El Puntarrón Chico de Beniaján, 30. La Bastida de la Totana, 31. Lorca, 32. Fuente Alamo, 33. El Argar, 34. Gatas, 35. Los Millares, 36. Gar Kahal, 37. Kefh Taht el

Ghar, 38. Achakar, 39. Dar-es-Soltan, 40. Sidi Cherkaoui, 41. Sidi Messaoud, 42. Oukaïmeden.

Another important characteristic of the landscape of the southwest Mediterranean, of relevance to this period, is the occurrence of metal ores, specifically copper, tin, silver, and gold. Southern Iberia (particularly southwest Iberia) has copper, tin, and silver ores (Cunliffe 2001: 222; 2008: 181). In contrast, north Africa does not have significant copper or tin ores (Schürmann 1974: 243; Bisson *et al.* 2000: 85, 109). There are larger copper deposits further to the south in Mauritania, and tin in northern Nigeria, but these regions appear not to have been exploited by people living in north Africa.

While ecology is more directly linked to subsistence economies and social structure than mortuary practices, ethnographic studies demonstrate that mortuary practices are often closely tied to fertility, agricultural regeneration, and social reproduction (Bloch and Parry 1982). Therefore, this chapter will also attempt to consider how a Mediterranean ecology and its regional variability may have shaped funerary rituals by constraining local economies and social practices. In turn, I also explore the role that funerary traditions of the second millennium BC may have played in the evolution of the social order and the landscape.

It is impossible to ignore the role of recent history in the archaeology of this region, however. Archaeology is, after all, a social practice guided by questions that are considered important to archaeologists and to their funding patrons. Thus, while conceiving of the southwest Mediterranean in purely geographic terms is enormously productive, history creates powerful resistance to such a geographic analysis (Cañete 2010). Spanish and Portuguese archaeologists have generally worked on the archaeological record within their own national borders. Archaeologists of Morocco and Algeria have been guided by questions relevant to their own identity and history, particularly the origin of the Berbers (Camps 1961; 1965; 1982). Most significant, however, is the

ambivalent historical relationship between Europe and north Africa, with their entangled histories of expansion (Moorish conquest of the Iberian Peninsula) and colonialism (Spanish Ceuta and Melilla, in Morocco), extending to the present-day immigration of north Africans to Spain and Portugal. These tensions reveal themselves in archaeological studies of this region – including those focusing on the Paleolithic (Barton *et al.* 2001) and Neolithic (Zilhão 2001) – in the recurring concern for the relative role of indigeneity and cultural interaction and the nature of this interaction (diffusionism, colonization, exchange, etc.).

Nevertheless, this chapter endeavors to grapple with the archaeological record as best as possible to consider how mortuary spaces and their associated assemblages of the second millennium BC reflected the social reality of the time and were manipulated to generate new realities. I also consider important themes that transcend this regional focus of Iberia and north Africa, such as the long use and reuse of tombs, the contributions of bioarchaeology toward understanding the lives of ancient peoples, and the evidence for social differentiation as expressed in the mortuary record.

Chronology and Background

Southwest Culture

The Early–Middle Bronze Age of the southwest dates from 2200–1200 Cal BC. Archaeological manifestations of the Southwest Culture are found in the Algarve and Baixo Alentejo of Portugal, as well as western Andalucía (Huelva, Seville, Cadiz, Cordoba, and Málaga) in Spain (Schubart 1975; García Sanjuán 2006; Soares *et al.* 2009). These sites include Atalaia (Schubart 1964; 1975), La Traviesa (García Sanjuán 1998), Alfarrobeira (Gomes 1994), Vinha do Casão (Gomes *et al.* 1986), and Las Minitas (Pavón Soldevila 2008). Typically, southwest burials of the Early–Middle Bronze Age are individual inhumations housed in stone-lined cists, although pits and chamber tombs or hypogea were also employed to house the dead. Cist tombs can be isolated or

grouped in cemeteries, sometimes with clusters of one large cist surrounded or annexed by smaller cists. La Traviesa exemplifies the case of smaller cists surrounding a large cist (García Sanjuán 1998) (Figure 32.2a). At Atalaia, smaller cists (and their associated stone enclosures) were annexed to larger cist tombs and their enclosures (Schubart 1964; 1975) (Figure 32.2b). The dead were accompanied by a standard array of grave goods, including undecorated ceramic bowls and copper artifacts.



Figure 32.2. (a) Plan of necropolis at La Traviesa, Seville, Spain (García Sanjuán 1998: 109). Grave complex III at Atalaia, Beja, Portugal (Schubart 1975, ‘Beilage’ 5; drawing by José Raboso Amat). (c) Plan of cist burial covered by tumulus at Talho de Chaparrinho, Serpa, Portugal (after Soares 1994, in Cardoso 2002: 328). (d) Plan of house VI at Peñalosa, Jaén, Spain, showing burials (numbered) (Contreras 2000: fig. 14.2).

While the burial record for the Southwest Culture is well documented, settlements of this period have been difficult to identify (Gamito 2003), constraining our ability to make close comparisons between settlement and burial records. Furthermore, human remains do not preserve well in parts of this region where soils are acidic (e.g., the Baixo Alentejo) and thus bioarchaeological studies for the southwest have regional gaps. Phosphate analysis has been applied at some Bronze Age burial sites to determine whether cists that have no human remains preserved ever actually housed the dead (Manuel-Valdés 1995).

The precursors to Early Bronze Age mortuary practices in the southwest, particularly the practice of individual burial, are apparent in the second half of the third millennium BC, during the Beaker Copper Age. Beaker graves are characterized by single burials in caves, *tholoi*, and other megalithic tombs that had been in use during the third millennium BC. Examples include Estremoz 7 and Anta das Casas do Canal, both in the Alentejo (Mataloto 2007).

During the Early Bronze Age (also known as the *epicampaniforme*; Cardoso 2002), individual graves were housed in separate cist burials but were associated with objects typical of the Beaker period, such as Beaker vessels, copper daggers, and wrist guards, as well as ceramics found in the Middle Bronze Age, such as carinated vessels. Sometimes, individual burials of this period were placed in tombs constructed in the earlier Copper Age. In southern Portugal, this period is known as the *Horizonte de Ferradeira*, which was first identified in the Algarve and named after the site of Ferradeira (Faro; Schubart 1971: 199–200; 1975). In addition to Ferradeira, Monte da Velha 1 (Vila Verde de Ficalho, Serpa) is also considered an exemplar of this horizon (Soares 2008), as is Cerro do Malhão (Alcoutim; Cardoso and Gradim 2003). The *Horizonte de Ferradeira* is comparable to other culture areas to the north and east of the Algarve. For example, the *Horizonte de Montelavar*, identified in the Estremadura, is characterized by cist burials associated with a copper dagger and Palmela points. Recently, archaeologists have also identified an Early Bronze

Age in the Alto Alentejo of Portugal, in the region of Ervedal (Mataloto 2005).

During the Middle Bronze Age, continuities and changes can be discerned in ritual practices. Middle Bronze Age burials in this region are generally housed in cist tombs, typically found in groups of between one and five. La Traviesa (Seville) is unusual, as it is associated with a large number of burials – 29 – of which 27 were excavated (García Sanjuán 1998). In addition to cists, Middle Bronze Age burials have also been discovered in pits (*fossas*) (Monte da Cabida 3) or in hypogea/artificial caves (Belmeque [Serpa]). Tumuli sometimes covered the tombs, such as at Talha de Chaparrinho, Serpa (Figure 32.2c) and at La Traviesa, Tomb 5 (Figure 32.2a, discussed further below). There can be multiple types of burial structures in one site, such as at Llago de la Virgen (Málaga), where cist or cistoid burials were used along with pits. Some earlier tombs were used during this period, as individuals dated to the second millennium BC have been identified in megalithic burials, including Tesorillo de la Llaná (Málaga), Estremoz 7, and Monte da Velha 1 (Serpa) (Schubart 1973; Fernández Ruiz 2004; Mataloto 2007; Soares 2008). There were thus multiple burial modalities practiced in the Middle Bronze Age of the southwest.

The Southeast/Argaric

To the east of the southwest Bronze Age culture is the culture area known as the Argaric, named after the type-site of El Argar (Siret and Siret 1887; Lull 1983). Well in excess of 100 radiocarbon dates exist for Argaric sites, which date to between 2250–1450 Cal BC (Castro *et al.* 1993–94; Chapman 2003; Aranda-Jiménez *et al.* 2009a; 2009b; García Sanjuán and Odriozola Lloret 2012). It is virtually contemporary with the southwest Early–Middle Bronze Age. Dozens of Argaric sites – settlements and burials – are known from the uplands and lowlands of the Spanish provinces of Almería, Granada, Jaén, Murcia, and Alicante. The best studied of these include Fuente Alamo (Schubart *et al.* 2001), Gatas (Castro *et al.* 1999), El Argar (Schubart

1993), Cerro de la Encina (Aranda-Jiménez and Molina-González 2005), Cuesta del Negro (Molina González and Pareja López 1975), Peñalosa (Contreras Cortés *et al.* 1995; Contreras Cortés 2000), Lorca (Ayala 1991; Martínez Rodríguez *et al.* 1996), La Bastida de la Totana (Siret and Siret 1887), and Illeta dels Banyets (López Padilla *et al.* 2006). Because Argaric burials are generally found in association with settlements, it is easier for archaeologists to integrate analyses of the lifeways and deathways for the Argaric than for the southwest Bronze Age.

The mortuary record for the southeast is far richer than for the southwest. More burials are preserved, these burials contain more artifacts and more high-prestige goods, and human remains are better preserved. Indeed, Argaric burials are often better preserved than the settlements that overlie them, due to their protected position underneath house floors (Aranda-Jiménez and Esquivel Guerrero 2006: 118). Their excellent preservation is also due to the more alkaline conditions of soils in the southeast, in contrast to the southwest.

As with burials of the southwest, single inhumations are most common in the Argaric, though double, triple, and even quadruple inhumations are known. The dead were typically buried in cists, artificial caves dug into the bedrock (*covachas*), pits, or ceramic urns. As in the southwest, the dead were furnished with ceramics, weaponry and tools, personal adornment, and animal offerings. Although technically undecorated, the ceramics were burnished to produce a metallic shine, and thus they had a strong visual impact. The weaponry consisted of metal daggers and swords; tools consisted of awls and needles. Personal adornment was made of stone, bone, and metal (which included silver and gold). What distinguished the Argaric most notably from the southwest is that Argaric burials are often intramural – typically located beneath house floors but also found in walls or between buildings (Lull 2000; Figure 32.2d). This form of mortuary practice is not recorded in the Iberian Peninsula prior to the Bronze Age, and indeed, it is relatively rare worldwide.

The cultural precursors to the Argaric are found in the Copper Age of southeast Spain, which lasted from 3000–2250 Cal BC (Castro *et al.* 1996b). During this period, the dead were housed collectively in megaliths and *tholoi* (as in the southwest). Sometimes these tombs were located in close association with settlements (such as at Los Millares), but more often they were spatially segregated from settlements. Copper Age settlements were often hilltop and fortified but could also be open. While some settlements were continuously occupied from the Copper Age to the Bronze Age (such as Gatas), most were abandoned at the end of the Copper Age, and thus the Early Bronze Age represents a break from an earlier settlement pattern.

The Argaric has traditionally been subdivided into two phases based on presumed changes in burial structure and grave goods (Blance 1964). Argar A was associated with burials in artificial caves and stone cists, and Argar B, in urns. Some scholars maintain that this chronology can be supported, at least at Fuente Alamo (Schubart *et al.* 2001). However, the current body of radiocarbon dates indicates that there is overlap between these two practices (Castro *et al.* 1993–94). Just as megalithic tombs in the Iberian southwest were sometimes used for burials into the second millennium BC, Copper Age tombs in southeast Spain were occasionally used into the Argaric – and sometimes through the Late Bronze, Iron, and Roman periods (Fernández Ruiz 2004; Lorrio and Montero Ruiz 2004). Thus, the mortuary landscape of southern Iberia – in both the southwest and southeast – was variable in burial modalities. Furthermore, existing burial structures (i.e., megaliths and *tholoi*) that housed the dead of the third millennium BC were sometimes used into the second millennium BC. Variability and continuity are important themes that scholars of the Bronze Age of southern Iberia will need to devote further energy toward understanding and explaining.

Bronze Age Ritual Practices in Southern Iberia

In this section, I examine how the living transformed the dead through ritual practices during the Early and Middle Bronze Age of southern Iberia. I discuss the construction of the burial chamber, the manipulation of the body, and the offering of goods to accompany the deceased.

The Southwest

During the Early Bronze Age of the Iberian southwest, the dead were housed in cist chambers lined with slabs of schist/slate. These cists were built into earlier megalithic (and collective) structures or constructed anew. Bodies have been recovered as both primary and secondary burials and found in association with ceramics and copper objects. At Monte da Velha 1, a cist burial was discovered on the surface of this megalithic tomb (Soares 2008); the position of the bones and missing elements are suggestive of a secondary burial. At Ferradeira, an individual in a dorsal decubitus position with their head pointed toward the north was recovered in a cist burial, which was subrectangular/oval in form and made up of 18 slabs (Schubart 1971). The individual was accompanied by a carinated bowl (placed to the north of the head); next to the lower left arm was an archer's wristguard made from slate, and next to the left hand, a copper dagger.

During the Middle Bronze Age, continuities and changes can be discerned in ritual practices associated with the dead. At Herdade do Montinho (Vale de Vargo, Serpa) and Folha das Palmeiras (Mourão), a fatty material was placed over the tomb, apparently to seal the tomb and make it impermeable. Analyses of this material suggest that it may have derived from pigs (Cardoso 2002: 327; Soares *et al.* 2009). On some tombs, the roof/cover stone was decorated with engravings of weaponry or tools (Estela de Assento [Santa Vitória, Beja]), some of which evoke weaponry types of the Mediterranean (Almagro 1966). These slabs may have been ways to mark, in a more public fashion than grave goods, the identity of special individuals.

The bodies housed in Middle Bronze Age tombs are typically found in the lateral decubitus flexed position, often

on the left side with the head oriented to the north. Intriguing variations occur, however. At Alcária do Pocinho (Vila Real de Santo António), a skull was found inside a carinated ceramic vessel; a second vessel held a cranial fragment, which was covered by a *Pecten maximus* shell (Cardoso 2002: 327). At Belmeque (Serpa), another unusual ritual was practiced. At this burial, two adults, with their crania missing, were recovered in association with two radii and two left cubits of a bovid (Oliveira 1994). This practice and ritual offerings of fauna are without parallel from this time period in the southwest, although they are not at all unusual in the southeast, as discussed further below. The artifactual assemblage found with these individuals is also striking in its richness and exoticism (such as a bronze knife with gold rivets, two daggers, and silver studs). Because of its particularity and evocation of Argaric burials, the Belmeque burial may represent ‘exogenous’ influence (Soares 1994: 183). The practice of burying the skull in vessels and the discovery of missing crania suggest that some individuals were decapitated in life, or that their bodies underwent a secondary burial practice, perhaps to generate cranial relics for circulation. Bioarchaeological studies of the remains may be able to distinguish which practice best explains this occurrence (Pérez 2011).

Ceramics and metal weapons and tools were generally placed with the deceased in the Middle Bronze Age. Ceramics are often found either between the hands and next to the chest or on the head (Gomes *et al.* 1986). Daggers are only found with males (Cardoso 2002: 331), which have been taken as evidence for the emergence of a warrior class. On the surface of some tombs were found fragments of ceramic vessels, which have been suggested to be the remains of funerary feasts (Soares *et al.* 2009: 447). In one burial (no. 5) at La Traviesa, a layer of ash was recovered above the body, suggestive of a purificatory ritual associated with the dead. The body was not cremated, however, as osteological remains were recovered in good preservation. This individual, a male, appears to have been a high-status individual, as he was buried beneath a large tumulus on high ground at the cemetery, with the other burials

surrounding it (García Sanjuán 1998: 175) (Figure 32.2a).

The Southeast/Argaric

Southeast mortuary rituals shared important commonalities with southwest ritual practices. First, a similar range of burial structures was used (cists, urns, pits, and artificial caves), and megalithic tombs were sometimes reused. Second, the body was typically found in the flexed position in both areas. Third, a broadly similar package of funerary goods accompanied the dead, including ceramics, weapons and tools, and personal adornment. There are, however, three primary differences between southeast and southwest mortuary rituals: (1) southeast burials are richer and more variable in the quantity and quality of grave goods, (2) urn burials are more common in the southeast, and (3) the practice of intramural burial is unique to the southeast.

Populations of the southeast marked the identities of their dead through the selection of tomb structure, body orientation, and burial goods. Differentiation by social status, as well as age and sex, is apparent from the material record. The dead could be housed with undecorated ceramics, bronze halberds and swords, tools (axes, awls), and personal adornment (rings, necklaces, diadems, pins, and bracelets – made of stone, bone, metal, gold, and silver). Some of the dead were buried without goods, while others were housed with a range of goods. Males tended to be buried with halberds and swords, and women with awls.

Children and infants were treated much like adults at death. Like adults, children were buried in intramural tombs – in cists, urns, pits, and artificial caves, although urns were the most common burial type for children (Valiente Malla 1990–91). From the 1979 excavations at Fuente Alamo, for example, eight urn burials were identified, seven of which contained children. Children are found with awls but not with halberds or swords, which are associated with male tombs. Sometimes children were buried with miniature ceramic vessels, which could have been toys or objects made by children as part of the process of teaching them how to make pottery (Sánchez Romero 2004). Some children were

found without burial goods at all, such as the infants from tombs 14 and 19 from El Puntarrón Chico de Beniaján (Murcia) (Ayala *et al.* 1999: 17). Other children were provided with high-status grave goods, such as the infant at La Almoloya de Pliego (Murcia), who was buried with two rings of copper/bronze and a ceramic vessel (Ayala *et al.* 1999: 17). These richly furnished child burials during the southeast Bronze Age have supported the notion that the period was characterized by inherited status (Lull *et al.* 2004).

In some exceptional cases, where environmental conditions allow for the preservation of organic remains, intriguing insights into the true variability and richness of ritual practices and material culture during the southeast can be gained. For example, at Castellón Alto (Granada), partly mummified bodies of an adult and infant were recovered in an artificial cave at the site (grave no. 121; Molina González *et al.* 2003; Rodríguez-Ariza *et al.* 2004). Also found were a timber slab and drystone wall that sealed the cave. Hair and skin fragments from the individual were preserved, and in addition to the typical assemblage of ceramics, a dagger and axe, the wooden handle of the axe and fragments of flax and possibly wool were recovered). Discoveries such as these are reminders of how much of the ritual record is lacking.

Spanish archaeologists have devoted significant energy toward analyzing the variability in the Argaric mortuary rituals and assessing how they might reflect social differentiation as well as structured power relations (Lull 1983; Chapman 1990; Contreras Cortés *et al.* 1995; 1996; Sánchez Romero 2004; Aranda-Jiménez and Esquivel Guerrero 2006; Montón Subías 2007; Aranda-Jiménez *et al.* 2009b; and see discussion in Montón Subías, this volume). Embedded in this inquiry is the long-standing concern among Iberianists with the nature of social organization during the Argaric and, specifically, the degree to which the Argaric can be considered a class-based society. The shift from collective burials, as practiced during the Copper Age, to individualized tombs during the Bronze Age has been

interpreted as a shift from lineage/extended families to nuclear families. Lull *et al.* conducted a statistical analysis of Argaric mortuary assemblages, leading them to argue for five levels or ‘social categories’ of society (Lull 1983; Lull and Estévez 1986). There is no doubt that there was significant variability in social identity expressed in death and likely in life during the Bronze Age, but determining how this social differentiation emerged and was maintained is a major challenge for archaeologists.

Drawing from the work of Dietler (1996; 2001) and others on commensality, scholars have contributed toward this end by exploring the role of feasting in cementing and negotiating social ties and in naturalizing unequal social relations during the southeast Bronze Age (Aranda-Jiménez and Esquivel Guerrero 2006; 2007; Aranda-Jiménez and Montón-Subías 2011). The bones of young cattle and ovicaprids found in funerary contexts provide some evidence of these feasting practices. It has also been noted that tombs with the richest artifactual remains are associated with the bones of cattle, suggesting that cattle were an important source and measure of wealth. For example, tombs 9, 13, 18, and 21 at Cerro de la Encina, which housed a large number of artifacts, were associated with bovids. In contrast, burial 14 at the site was a tomb with fewer remains and ovicaprids. Cattle not only marked different status groups but also age classes. At the site of Fuente Alamo, cattle remains were found with adults, whereas ovicaprids were found in association with *covacha* or *pithoi* tombs, with both adults and children. Aranda-Jiménez and Esquivel Guerrero (2006) also suggest that the highly burnished ceramics – with their strong visual impact – that were deposited with the Argaric dead may also reflect the importance of mortuary feasting.

The Lives of the Dead

The Southwest

Few bioanthropological studies have been conducted on individuals from Bronze Age tombs of the southwest. As part of their studies of the La Traviesa tombs, Pecero Espín and

Guijo Mauri (1998: 212) summarize 21 individuals known from four burial sites of the southwest; these include Chichina (five), Setefilla (four), Las Palomas (three), and Vinha do Casão (nine). Of these individuals, five were identified as female, six as male, with the sex of the remaining individuals unidentifiable. In terms of age class, the largest age class (28.57%) was adults between 21–30 years of age (Class IV); infants between the ages of 0 and 6 years (Class I) represented a relatively small group (14%). This is markedly different from the age distributions from Late Neolithic/Copper Age burials, where children represent between 30% and 50% of burial populations (Silva 2003). If the pattern identified by Pecero Espín and Guijo Mauri is representative, this might mean that either childhood mortality declined during the southwest Bronze Age or most children were differentially treated at death and buried apart from adults at this time.

The cemetery at Las Minitas (Badajoz) produced the largest number of individuals identified from the southwest for the Bronze Age (Pavón Soldevilla 2008). Despite significant deterioration of the osteological remains, the archaeologists were able to identify the remains of 31 individuals. None had caries, and most had a great deal of wear on their teeth, suggestive of a highly fibrous/vegetal diet that was low in sugar. The average age at death was 20 years, with only one individual who lived beyond 45 years of age. In comparison to the average age at death for populations in the southeast, individuals in the southwest seemed to have a lower life expectancy (Pavón Soldevilla 2008: 61). The poor preservation of individuals from southwest burials, in contrast to those in the Argaric area, will always make such comparisons highly tentative.

The Southeast/Argaric

The wealth of bioanthropological evidence for the southeast Bronze Age has stimulated many important studies directed toward evaluating changes in health and traumatic injury from the earlier Copper Age and assessing variability by

settlement population, gender, and age class during the Argaric. The Laboratory of Physical Anthropology at the University of Granada has played a major role in the development of this research. Overall, some changes in health and mortality are apparent from the Copper Age to the Bronze Age. Furthermore, it appears that the Bronze Age was associated with increasing biological differentiation between men and women, between settlement populations, and by age class. Overall, however, the health of Argaric individuals was relatively high (Kunter 1990).

Some variability is evident between settlement populations in terms of health indicators. For example, the 21 individuals studied from Fuente Amarga (Granada) evinced relatively rare incidence of disease when compared to other Argaric populations (Alemán *et al.* 1996). The most common pathology found in individuals buried at the site was osteoarthritis (and this was found only in older individuals). One individual suffered multiple traumas. The general health of this population in comparison with other Argaric populations suggests that it experienced a 'better adaptation to the environment' than other contemporary groups (Alemán *et al.* 1996: 20).

Men and women experienced different biological stresses during the southeast Bronze Age, for example different musculoskeletal stresses not explainable by sexual dimorphism (Al Oumaoui *et al.* 2004; Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 2004). Osteological indicators show that males did more walking and more climbing up steep slopes than women. Argaric women present a development pattern similar to female medieval populations, where a high sexual division of labor was established. Sexual dimorphism is higher among Argaric populations than in Copper Age populations, suggesting a change in the organization of work between the Copper Age and Argaric, with activities involving less mobility for Argaric women.

Vertebral pathologies, including Schmorl's nodes, also occur at higher rates among males than females (Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 2010). More than 1000 vertebrae from 105 individuals at six Argaric sites were studied to determine

activity patterns and whether there were differences by gender. Compression fractures more often occur with older women, though this was not statistically significant. The higher incidence of Schmorl's nodes is consistent with other activity markers for Argaric males. In terms of arthritis, no statistically significant difference was found between men and women: men, 38%, women 25.9% (Aranda-Jiménez *et al.* 2009b). Children were found with some postcranial fractures, most notably at Castellón Alto (Jiménez-Brobeil *et al.* 2006). Given the location of the settlement on a rugged promontory, these injuries have been interpreted as evidence of accidents incurred by some children who were left to play in this somewhat hazardous environment.

Some increase in caries is suggested in Bronze Age populations of the southeast. A study of 19 individuals from Cerro de la Encina (Granada), which focused on pathologies, indicated higher rates of caries than for Neolithic and Copper Age populations in Andalucía (Jiménez-Brobeil and Garcia Sanchez 1989–90). The caries rate for Andalucía is 2.8% for the Neolithic, 5.4% for the Copper Age, and 6% at Cerro de la Encina.

Another dimension of Bronze Age lifeways of the southeast that has been illuminated through the mortuary record is violent conflict and the degree to which conflict characterized Bronze Age life. The Bronze Age of Europe is generally associated with the emergence of a warrior elite (Harrison 2004), and the appearance of weaponry in burials associated with highly fortified settlements would suggest such militarism. However, recent research suggests that the notion of a warrior class during the Bronze Age of the southeast cannot be sustained (Aranda-Jiménez *et al.* 2009a). Although halberds and swords have only been recovered in association with males, and halberds only with men older than 35 (Castro *et al.* 1993–94), they remain rare goods. Indeed, the vast majority of males were not buried with these items. At El Argar, only 15 halberds and four swords were documented from a total of 1035 graves. In fact, the number of halberds recovered for the entire Argaric period is estimated to be 50. Even more striking is the rarity

of swords: only 13 have been documented (Brandherm 2003). Not only are halberds and swords rare, but archaeometallurgical studies demonstrate that they would not have been suitable for combat (Carrión *et al.* 2002; Aranda-Jiménez *et al.* 2009a). The bioarchaeological evidence points in a similar direction. Of 155 skeletons from six Argaric sites, 17% suffered some kind of trauma. However, these traumas do not indicate blade injuries, which would be expected if the swords and halberds were used. The authors of this study suggest that the weapons produced in the Bronze Age functioned predominantly as reminders of the dominant class's ability to inflict violence but were not generally used (Aranda-Jiménez *et al.* 2009a).

The double burials often found at Bronze Age sites in the southeast have been the subject of provocative analyses and discussions. In order to determine whether these double burials (usually of a male and a female) support the nuclear family hypothesis for the Bronze Age, Chapman *et al.* conducted a series of bioarchaeological studies with AMS dating of the individuals. What they discovered was that the chronometric dates for the two individuals differed by more than two generations, with the female typically predating the male (Buikstra *et al.* 1990; Kunter 1990; Castro *et al.* 1993–94; Buikstra and Hoshower 1994; Chapman 2005: 35). What these data seem to suggest is the possibility of a lineage-based society, with some degree of matrilineality. Matrilocality is supported by studies of phenotypic/cranial variation, which indicate that Argaric males were significantly more heterogeneous (five times more) than females and, thus, more mobile in their post-marital residence patterns (Buikstra *et al.* 1990). Montón argues, however, that we must exercise great caution in accepting a model of matrilineality (Montón Subías 2010). For example, at the double burial in tomb 21 at Cerro de la Encina, the female is superimposed over the male. However, the date for the male is somewhat more recent than that for the female (although with their standard deviation they overlap considerably).

How the Dead Structured the Lives of the Living

While there are many commonalities between the mortuary practices of southwest and southeast Iberia, the fact that intramural burials occurred in the southeast but not in the southwest suggests that profoundly different phenomenological practices were involved in the construction of burial chambers and in their spatial relationship to the living during the Bronze Age. This suggests that the living experienced a different relationship to their dead in these two areas, and that the dead structured their lives in distinctive ways. In this section, I explore how these different burial modalities – the more publicly visible burials of the southwest that were spatially distinct from settlements versus the more private intramural burials of the southeast – shaped the social lives of people during the Bronze Age.

The labor involved in constructing burials is most often considered in the case of monumental tombs, such as megaliths (Renfrew 1973; Sjögren 1986; Richards and Whitby 1997) and pyramids (Smith 2006). These monumental constructions are generally understood as public displays or materializations of labor surplus (Earle 1991). Rarely do archaeologists consider the labor involved in more modest, individual tombs. The excavators at La Traviesa, however, weighed the stones used to construct each of the 27 cists (including their tumulus) and determined a strong association between the weight of these stones and the quantity and quality of the burial goods found in the tomb (García Sanjuán 1998: 109–19). This was particularly notable for tomb 5, mentioned earlier, whose stones weighed a total of 1327 kg; the remaining cists averaged 315 kg in weight (the next largest tomb was cist 13, at 496 kg). It is difficult to know, however, the human labor involved in the construction of this large tomb and the smaller ones. Given that many modest-sized stones were involved, the construction of much of the tomb could have involved a few people, but one might imagine that it could

have also engaged the larger community, with each person bringing a few stones to the tomb. The partibility of the cist tombs, particularly those with tumuli – the fact that they are predominantly made up of relatively small stones – makes assessments of labor difficult. Perhaps the best assertion one can make regarding labor for these tombs is that it was likely highly variable. Given that it would be difficult to know whether just a few or many individuals constructed the tombs, labor was, in a sense, masked.

In contrast to the hidden labor involved in constructing the actual tombs of the southwest, the burials themselves were public and visible. Although not as visible from a long distance as a megalith, they marked the landscape in highly distinctive ways and would have structured people's experience of that landscape as they moved through it (Tilley 1994). Their configuration, often with a larger and more centrally placed tomb surrounded by smaller tombs, suggests a genealogical mapping of the landscape – the creation of a landscape of ancestors (Arnold and Murray 2002). But unlike the lineages housed in megaliths, the cist tombs mapped relationships between individuals onto the landscape.

This is markedly different from the intramural burial practices of the southeast. The dead were not made available for public view; they were brought into the domain of households. Houses in the Argaric, therefore, were the material expressions for genealogies. Lull questions whether the shift from collective burial practices to intramural practices, presumably the responsibility of families, might have weakened communal social linkages (Lull 2000). While a compelling argument, families may also have been the primary labor force for nonintramural burials, such as in the southwest. What distinguishes the Argaric burials is their private nature, their nonvisibility to the public, and their mapping – not of the agricultural landscape – but of the domestic sphere of the house. The placement of the dead under house floors or in close association with domestic spaces also constrained the movement of the living, to some extent. If proximity between the living and the dead were

important, then any household move would have required some labor to exhume the dead. Given the more public and territorial location of the cists in the southwest, a household move might not have necessitated a move of the dead.

Some have proposed a more functional interpretation of intramural tombs. The Sirets, for example, suggested that the wealth of Argaric people was better protected from enemies or invaders if housed in intramural burials (Montón Subías, this volume). Intramural burials are, however, also known during the Pre-Pottery Neolithic of the Near East at sites such as Çatal Höyük (Andrews *et al.* 2005) and Jericho (Gonen 1992), which represent diverse social landscapes. What is clearly needed is a cross-cultural analysis of intramural burial practices, which examines whether associations exist between this practice and forms of economy, kinship, and sociopolitical structure and history.

Iberian and North African Connections in the Second Millennium BC

In this section, I briefly consider the evidence for relations between groups in the southern Iberian Peninsula and north Africa during the second millennium BC. Archaeologists have long considered the nature of interactions between the Iberian Peninsula and north Africa during prehistory (Jodin 1957; Tarradell 1959; Souville 1962; 1965; Camps 1984; Muzzolini 1988; Poyato Holgado and Hernando Grande 1988; Souville 1988). Contemporary human populations lived in both southern Iberia and north Africa, the distance separating the landmasses is relatively small (14 km, at the shortest point), and there is good evidence of goods, particularly ostrich eggshell and ivory, traded between these two landmasses during the third millennium BC, immediately prior to the Bronze Age (Harrison and Gilman 1977). Thus, despite the challenges of navigating the Strait, such as countercurrents and mutable winds (Martín de la Cruz 1988), there is no doubt that such interactions took place. The more difficult question to answer is what kind of

contact and exchange occurred in the second millennium BC. The radiocarbon dates for the second millennium BC period are very limited at this point, and the most compelling evidence for contact is the rock art of the High Atlas Mountains, depicting bronze weaponry of similar form to Iberian tools, and cist burials.

During the Copper Age, populations living in north Africa and the Iberian Peninsula traded in goods, such as Bell Beaker ceramics, ostrich eggshells, and ivory. In 1953, Alberto Castillo presented evidence for Beakers in Morocco at the First Congress of Spanish Morocco (Bokbot 2005). Since then, Beaker ceramics, sometimes associated with copper objects, such as Palmela points, have been identified from sites along coastal Morocco but also in the interior; nearly all are cave sites. These sites include Achakar, Gar Kahal, Kehf Taht el Ghar, Dar-es-Soltan, Sidi Messaoud, and Sidi Cherkaoui (Souville 1977; Harrison 1980; Bokbot 2005; Rodrigue 2009). Although most scholars believe these ceramics were imported, some evidence suggests the possibility for a local, north African production. For example, radiocarbon dates from the cave of Kef el Baroud suggest an early date for the Beaker period (Gif 2888, 4750 ± 110 BP and Gif 2889, 5160 ± 110 BP; Wailly 1976). To confirm the reliability of these early dates, a new set of dates was obtained using thermoluminescence from Beaker ceramics from the site (5035 ± 343 BP; 5254 ± 524 BP; Mikdad 1998). While they seem to support the radiocarbon dates, they are early for Beakers. Copper objects, similar to Palmela points, were also found at the site. As the site is located 10 km from an open-air copper mine, exploited since antiquity (Bokbot 2005: 147), a local/indigenous metallurgical tradition seems possible. Some archaeologists have asked why so few metal pieces exist, if there are local ores available. Indeed, the rarity of such goods (and their concentration along the coast) would support that they were imports.

To assess the nature of exchange between north Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, a major study, using nondestructive optical and spectroscopic methods, of all ivory objects from

the Iberian Peninsula during the Copper Age is underway (Schuhmacher 2004; Schuhmacher *et al.* 2009). One of the major contributions of this study is that the number of ivory goods in the Iberian Peninsula is far greater than previously understood. A total of 1060 ivory objects from 130 sites, both burials and settlements in southern Iberia, were identified. Another important contribution is the determination that the African savannah and Asian elephants were the source of much of this ivory. The earliest contexts for ivory came from the southwest (Portuguese) sites, and these are predominantly of African savannah elephants.

Megalithic sites are also widely known throughout the Maghreb. While many are associated with Neolithic-type objects such as polished stone axes (Salmon 1904; Koehler 1932; Martínez Santa-Olalla 1935; Camps 1965; Lambert 1975; Gozalbes Cravioto 2006), few have absolute dates, and thus it is impossible to know their precise history of use.

When we turn to the evidence for the second millennium BC, the picture becomes even hazier. Two lines of evidence are most often cited for a Bronze Age of Morocco: rock art and cist burials (Figures 32.3a and 32.3b). Depictions of engravings of hundreds of 'Bronze Age' weapons, with formal similarities to Iberian Bronze Age weaponry (daggers and halberds), have been amply documented in the High Atlas Mountains, most notably at l'Oukaïmeden plateau (Malhomme 1953; 1959–61; Chenorkian 1979; Rodrigue 1997; 1998; Salih *et al.* 1998; Kaache 1999; El Graoui *et al.* 2008). Recent trial trenches, some associated with hearths, produced dates at Oukaïmeden. However, these dates were of the first millennium BC and do not confirm a second millennium BC date for the art (El Graoui *et al.* 2008: 107). While no daggers of the same form have been recovered in the High Atlas, some small metal pieces were recovered, including one copper arrowhead (Malhomme 1953), but again, no absolute dates exist for these. Dozens of cist burials found in north Africa have also been considered to be Bronze Age by some prehistorians (Jodin 1964). These are formally similar to southern Iberian

tombs of the Bronze Age, but without dates, it is impossible to know if these are contemporary.

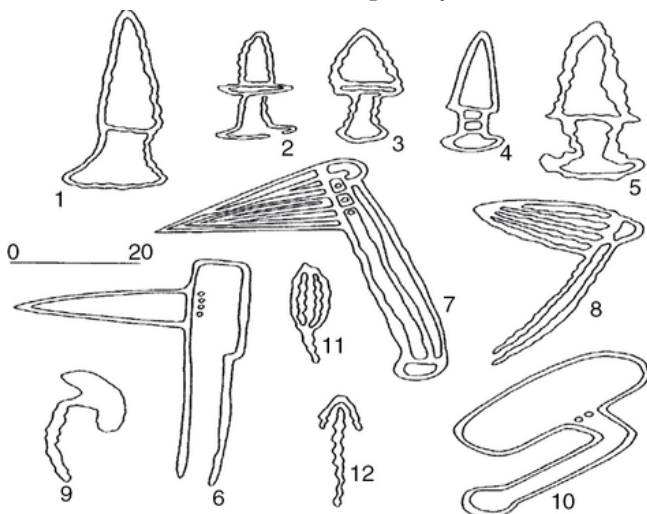


Figure 32.3. Rock art of the High Atlas (Rodrigue 2002: fig. 19).

A potentially important contribution to our understanding of contact across the Strait of Gibraltar comes from genetic studies of cattle (Anderung *et al.* 2005). Using dated cattle remains from Bronze Age sites in Spain, geneticists have discovered the presence of the T1 haplogroup in their DNA, which would indicate an African origin for some of the cattle. Given the heat resistance of African cattle, it would be reasonable for pastoralists in southern Iberia to have incorporated these cattle into their breeds. Subsequent studies conducted on prehistoric cattle from Spanish archaeological contexts support this earlier finding, although the input from the African cattle appears to be fairly small (Anders Götherström, pers. comm. 2010).

It is clear that the only way that the archaeologies of north Africa and the Iberian Peninsula can be discussed in an integrated manner is through absolute dates. A major program of generating absolute dates for prehistoric sites in Morocco began in 1982 as a collaboration between the Mission Préhistorique Française and the Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine du Maroc

(Daugas *et al.* 1998; Wengler *et al.* 1998; Daugas 2002; Sbihi-Alaoui *et al.* 2004). From this program, the first dates for the second millennium BC in Morocco were generated, specifically for the site of Gar Kahal (Tarradell 1954; Gilman 1975). Two TL dates were obtained on black polished pottery, one of which seems in error, but the other (CLER 130) suggests a date of 3880 ± 300 BP, or roughly 1900 BC. Another collaboration began in 1994 between the Kommission für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Archäologie des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Bonn, and the Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine, Rabat, to conduct research in northeast Morocco (Mikdad and Eiwanger 2000). A series of radiocarbon dates for the Neolithic was generated but none for the second millennium BC (Görsdorf and Eiwanger 1998). It is hoped that, in the near future, a comprehensive review of the late prehistoric dates for Morocco, comparable to that provided by Lubell *et al.* (1992) for the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic of the Maghreb, will be possible.

Conclusions

Our understanding of the cultural landscape of the second millennium BC in the southwestern Mediterranean is highly uneven. For the southwest, many burials are known, and we have some understanding of the ritual practices that accompanied the disposal of the dead. However, with relatively few settlements to relate to these burials and few well-preserved bodies to learn about diet, health, and mobility of people living at that time, it is difficult to understand the relationship between lifeways and deathways in the southwest.

For the southeast, there is an abundance of burials, well-preserved human remains, and well-excavated settlements to provide a richer picture of the social and economic dynamics that shaped the lives of the dead. What is certain is that the intramural mortuary practices of the Argaric are distinctive from all others in the Iberian Peninsula at the time. This warrants more consideration than has previously been devoted to it. Intramural burials tethered the living to the

domestic spaces in a different way than in the southwest, where cemeteries were separate from settlements. How did this cultural divergence occur? What ideological and social forces instigated this dramatic change?

The ecological changes that are documented for the fourth–second millennia BC for the southwest Mediterranean must be better integrated into interpretations of the cultural landscape. One possibility is that with increasing aridity, which would have been more marked in the southeast than in the southwest, human groups may have had to intensify their agricultural production through irrigation, terracing, and so on, and employ more drought-resistant crops and animals (Smith 1985). The genetic evidence for some north African contribution to Iberian cattle during the Bronze Age may indicate that animals – and perhaps crops – were being imported from north Africa to the peninsula to satisfy that need. Cattle bones found in high-status Argaric burials seem to signal their critical role in economic and symbolic life. Might these Argaric cattle themselves have higher signals of north African genetic material than cattle from more northern Iberian sites? This would be an important study for future researchers.

The bioanthropological evidence for the Argaric is similarly intriguing, particularly with respect to the possibility of matrilocality. If cattle were being imported from north Africa, might this exchange have also involved people – particularly male pastoralists, who would have understood the particular behavior and needs of the cattle. A shift in population makeup such as this might have provoked the formation of a new sense of identity among communities in southeast Spain and structured new mortuary practices in the form of intramural burials. Genetic studies of humans, animals, and plants found in association with Argaric sites would clearly need to be conducted to determine this.

This comparative analysis of the Iberian southwest, the southeast, and north Africa is a first approximation, using the currently available data. This exercise illustrates the central role that radiocarbon dating has in undertaking such

work. Without these absolute dates, there is no way of discerning geographic trends in cultural change. For example, it is impossible to know whether the cist burials in north Africa date to the Bronze Age, and whether they are earlier, contemporary, or later than those in the Iberian Peninsula. Without a major program comparing radiocarbon dates from the southeast and the southwest, it is difficult to know the geographic gradients involved: that is, did the early Bronze Age – with its new burial practices and settlements – begin earlier in the southeast than the southwest? At the micro-scale level, radiocarbon dates for human remains are essential for fine-tuning our interpretation of mortuary practices, particularly when there is more than one individual buried in a tomb. It is hoped that this chapter will stimulate researchers from both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar and both sides of the Guadiana River to integrate research programs and harness the full range of interdisciplinary methods – from bioanthropology, paleoecology, and genetics – to address new and pivotal questions regarding human interactions in the ancient past.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the assistance provided by Gonzalo Aranda, Rui Boaventura, Leonardo García Sanjuán, Antonio Gilman, David Killick, António Monge Soares, Sandra Montón, Alain Rodrigue, and Rasmus Schlütter.

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33 An Entangled Past: Island Interactions, Mortuary Practices and the Negotiation of Identities on Early Iron Age Cyprus

Sarah Janes

Abstract

This study is concerned with the Iron Age archaeology of Cyprus, from the end of the Late Bronze Age to the start of the Cypro-Archaic period, ca. 1200–700 BC. It treats thematic issues involving death, burial and identity, engaging certain theoretical perspectives with the large body of extant mortuary data, in order to explore the complexities of sociopolitical development on Cyprus during the Iron Age. Specifically, I consider how the material culture of mortuary practices was actively involved in the multiple social and spatial dynamics – maritime connections, migrations, colonial encounters and intra-island interactions – that occurred with the collapse of larger, regional palatial societies at the end of the Late Bronze Age, and the subsequent emergence of smaller, local hybridised polities involving native Cypriotes and incoming peoples from the Aegean and Levant during the Iron Age. Traditionally, Cyprus's sociopolitical development during the Iron Age has been explained in terms of external stimuli, with particular focus on the Aegeans and the Phoenicians. This study, however, pays particular attention to the internal dynamics that helped transform the social and political trajectory of Cyprus during the Iron Age.

Introduction

The Cypro-Geometric period (CG; ca. 1100–700 BC) constitutes the formative years of the Cypriot Iron Age. As the transitional period between two distinct urban societies – the Late Bronze Age (LBA) and the Cypro-Archaic (CA) – the CG, or early Iron Age (EIA) (see [Table 33.1](#)), is central to understanding the long-term social and political development of the island. As Iacovou (2005b: 24) notes, ‘no time after the eleventh and the tenth centuries is more decisive for the island’s political development during the first millennium BC’. This chapter examines the sociopolitical trajectory of the island at that time, undertaking an analysis of the mortuary records of LBA Enkomi and EIA Salamis ([Figure 33.1](#)). I challenge the traditional argument that the island’s sociopolitical development was primarily the result of external intervention. Rather, I explore the notion that the eleventh century BC was a ‘time of intensive human movements in the eastern Mediterranean, when newcomers and natives on Cyprus transformed the island’s material and social practices’ (Voskos and Knapp 2008: 675).

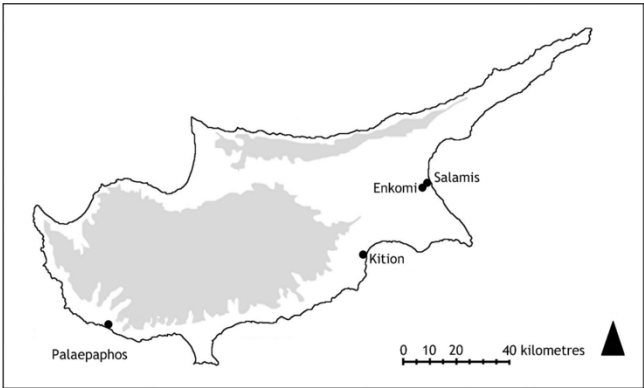


Figure 33.1. Map of Cyprus, showing sites mentioned in text (Sarah Janes).

Table 33.1. *Chronological table, with dates cited in this paper.*

Period	Periods	Years	Broad

			period classifications
Late Bronze Age	LBA	1450–1100 BC	LBA
Proto-Geometric (traditional LC IIIB)	PG	1100–1050 BC	EIA
Cypro-Geometric I	CG I	1050–950 BC	
Cypro-Geometric II	CG II	950–850 BC	
Cypro-Geometric III	CG III	850–750 BC	
Cypro-Archaic	CA	750–475 BC	MIA

Until relatively recently, the EIA was largely overlooked due to a perceived lack of archaeological data for the period. This was because the data are almost entirely mortuary-based, and there was some reluctance to deal with complex burial remains. This issue was compounded by a long history of inconsistent excavation and recording techniques, and the varying quality of the resulting publications (fully discussed in Janes [2008](#): 29–31).

Furthermore, scholarship focused on the ethnicity of people who lived on the island at the start of the Iron Age and, consequently, there was a tendency to promote the notion of the ‘hellenisation’ of Cyprus, emphasising the role of Aegean peoples in the island’s sociopolitical developments. This assertion was largely based on the ascription of Greek ‘ethnicity’ to pottery, artefacts and innovations in the EIA archaeological record, many of which had Homeric associations in the eyes of the excavators (e.g. Mylonas [1948](#)). Moreover, later fifth-century BC foundation legends were given the weight of historical fact (Iacovou [2005a](#): 126). When combined with the construction of what has been termed the ‘Hellenisation narrative’ of nineteenth-

and twentieth-century scholars (Leriu 2007), twentieth-century colonial archaeology (Given 1998) and nationalistic agendas (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998; Leriu 2007), people from the Aegean were assigned a pre-eminent role on the island during the EIA.

Over the last 30 years, however, research interests have shifted away from narratives based on the ‘ethnicity’ of individual artefacts and on later textual evidence to those focusing on processes of sociopolitical change (see, in particular, Rupp 1985; 1997; Iacovou and Michaelides 1999; Janes 2008). Moreover, with the creation of a database bringing coherence to the disparate records of the EIA mortuary landscape (Janes 2008), significant steps have been taken towards a more nuanced understanding of the long-term history of LBA–EIA Cyprus.

Mediterranean Upheavals: Thirteenth–Eleventh Centuries BC

Situated on major routes of commerce and interaction, Cyprus played a central role in trade, exchange and the movement of ideas, materials and traditions across the Mediterranean throughout antiquity. By the thirteenth century BC, a series of thriving, urban centres had emerged along the coast of Cyprus, and the island had become a key player in international trade, largely as a result of the island’s rich and desirable copper resources. Thus, when the major states of the LBA eastern Mediterranean – including the Mycenaean palatial systems and Levantine centres such as Ras Ibn Hani and Ugarit (Karageorghis 1987: 117; 1992: 81; Rupp 1987: 147) – suffered a severe social and economic collapse during the late thirteenth century BC, the island did not go unaffected (Iacovou 1998: 334–35). During the twelfth century BC, Cyprus entered a period of uncertainty and urban disruption, evidenced by the abandonment and destruction at many LBA sites. These disruptions, however, were neither long lasting nor severe, and there is significant evidence of sociopolitical continuity across this period (Snodgrass 1994). In particular, the sites of Palaepaphos and Kition exhibit evidence for continuous habitation across the

LBA–EIA transition, and the construction of monumental sanctuaries at that time suggests the presence of prosperous strong and centralised authorities (Webb 1999: 292; Iacovou 2006b: 326).

At the start of the eleventh century BC, following this period of population movement and social unrest, a new sociopolitical landscape began to emerge, and Cyprus embraced a social and material diversity that reflected the hybridity of the island's EIA population (Knapp 2009: 231). The collapse of the Mediterranean states in the thirteenth century BC resulted in increased and diversified movements of groups and communities, travelling along new or established routes in a Mediterranean that found itself temporarily free from state rule (Iacovou 2006a: 33–34). The eleventh-century BC horizon on Cyprus reflects the complex meeting and mixing of people and cultures stimulated by the prevailing socio-economic conditions. By the time the Neo-Assyrian state emerged on the nearby mainland in the eighth century BC, the Mediterranean had been free from outside rule for four centuries, and it was within this 'power vacuum' (Iacovou 2002: 84) that the territorial polities of CA Cyprus became fully established (Iacovou 2002: 83–84; see also Stylianou 1989: 379–82).

Reconstructions of the island's sociopolitical trajectory from the thirteenth to the eighth centuries BC have focused on external influences as the primary stimuli of (secondary) state-formation – in particular from Aegean peoples during the twelfth–eleventh centuries BC, and the Phoenicians during the ninth century BC (for summaries of the main arguments, see Leriou 2007; Knapp 2008: 281–97). As Knapp and van Dommelen (2010: 13) note, however, focusing on the impact of external forces 'precludes any attempt to consider how enduring factors such as mobility, contact, conflict and co-presence influenced and underlay local people's cultural and social practices'. It is not disputed that people from the Aegean and the Levantine coast were part of the multiple social and spatial dynamics of the EIA that helped to shape the sociopolitical trajectory of the

island. Moreover, despite the tenuous nature of the evidence for a predominantly Greek influence on EIA culture, it is clear that by the Cypro-Classical period ‘certain elements of the Cypriot population chose to define themselves as Greek’ (Steel 2008: 156; see also Iacovou 1999). The Aegeans and the Phoenicians had been part of ongoing ‘conversations’ with the island since the LBA (Voskos and Knapp 2008: 661). Traditional interpretations, however, discuss the impact of these external forces in terms of ‘decisive episodes’ (Iacovou 2008: 244), erroneously categorising homogenous communities whose impact on the island was administered in short event horizons, whilst the situation was undoubtedly far more complex. As Vanschoonwinkel (2006: 103) notes, ‘Greek penetration [of Cyprus] was a lengthy and complex process’.

Recent scholarship has turned to the dynamics of sociopolitical interaction on Cyprus during the EIA, examining the extant data more thoroughly and providing more nuanced studies of the island’s development (Janes 2008; Blackwell 2010). This chapter is concerned with how the Archaic city-kingdoms emerged, how people and cultures engaged with each other on Cyprus within the dynamic and changing world of the eleventh century BC, and how they negotiated their roles within and beyond the island community.

Identity and Sociopolitical Change in the Mortuary Record

The ways in which people identify themselves within the world are increasingly better explored and documented (see, e.g., Jones 1997; Diaz-Andreu *et al.* 2005). As Knapp and van Dommelen (2010: 4) note, identity is ‘a transitory, even unstable relation of difference’, an elaborate, multifaceted and dynamic social construct. Projections of identity are manifest at times of social contact as groups and individuals, consciously or subconsciously, try to establish their relationship within some specific form of interaction. Identity is dynamic; it fluctuates in response to social or

political stimuli and is constantly being redefined in an effort to maintain some distinction between ‘self’ and ‘other’ (Knapp 2001: 32–33, 38). Mortuary data represent the material remains of actions performed in a specific arena of social contact. In the context of LBA and EIA Cyprus, careful examination of identity within the mortuary record enables us to explore how different groups negotiated their identities in the light of multiple and diverse cultural contacts, and to gain insight into various social interactions.

After death, when a person is physically removed from their place within the community, there is often a heightened awareness of identity as roles and hierarchies are renegotiated (Keswani 2004: 1; see also Manning 1998: 40). Whilst mortuary behaviour is largely shaped by and reflects human responses to grief and bereavement (Cavanagh and Mee 1998; Tarlow 1999; various papers in Tarlow and Nilsson Stutz 2013), it also provides a means of controlling the threat death makes to the continuation of society (Manning 1998). Burials provide the living with an opportunity to enact, physically and symbolically, the renegotiation of personal and social identities, helping them to create or maintain social and political control through ‘display, self-promotion and the transference of rights and positions’ (Keswani 1989: 20; 2004: 1; Murphy 1998: 32, 36–38; Voutsaki 1998: 41). Periods of relative social and political stability are often reflected by patterns in mortuary behaviour and gradually shifting symbolic and material markers of identity (Janes 2008: 250). Sudden and dramatic changes may point to physical expressions of competition, display and hierarchy (Manning 1998: 40), indicating moments of instability as groups or individuals feel pressured to ‘mark themselves off’ from neighbours and/or rivals (Hodder 1982: 186–90).

Engaging with the vast corpus of EIA Cypriot mortuary data, I turn now to examine how external and internal connections were entangled, how the dynamics of these entanglements were reflected in negotiations of identity manifest in mortuary behaviour, and how the material culture of mortuary practices was actively involved in the

sociopolitical development of the island.

The Mortuary Landscape of Cyprus's East Coast

Three sites form the focus of emphasis in this chapter: Enkomi, Salamis and Palaepaphos. Around 180 tombs and 'mortuary features' have been excavated at Enkomi by various expeditions since the start of the twentieth century. These data vary in quality and, unfortunately, the stratigraphy and chronology often lack coherence (Ionas 1984; Keswani 2004: table 3.2). Here, I focus on the burial area of *Ayios Iakovos* inside the walls of the LBA city of Enkomi (Figure 33.2); the majority of the data used stem from Keswani's (2004) extensive study of LBA mortuary behaviour on Cyprus.

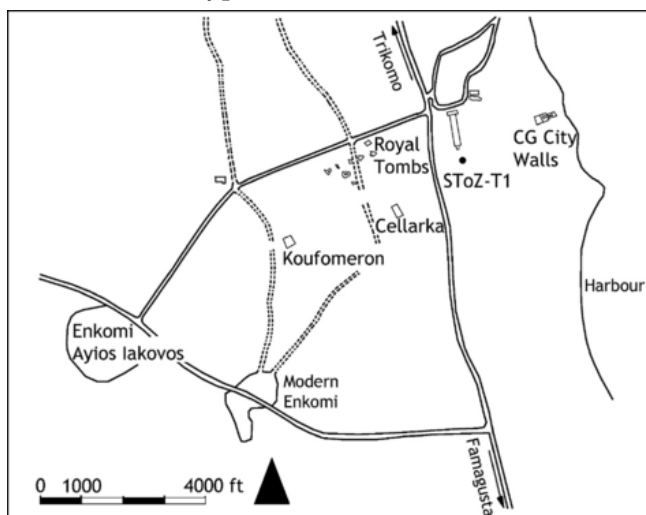


Figure 33.2. Plan showing burial areas at Enkomi and Salamis (after Karageorghis 1978: 2) (Sarah Janes).

At Salamis, there are eight known excavated burial areas dating from CG I to the Roman period. The excavated tombs at Salamis have been relatively well recorded, particularly the Royal Tombs, *Cellarka* and *Koufomeron* (Janes 2008: ch. 6). This study focuses on the CG I burial just outside the city walls and the early burials at the Royal Tombs dating to CG

III/CA I (Table 33.2 and Figure 33.2).

Table 33.2. Sites used in the analysis of Salamis and Palaepaphos, with number of tombs for each period.

	LBA	LC IIIB/ PG	CG I	CG II	CG III	CA I
	1200– 1100	1100– 1050	1050– 950	950– 850	850– 700	700– 600
Salamis			1			
Temple of Zeus						
Salamis					5	9
Royal Tombs						
Salamis						5
Cellarka						
Palaepaphos						4
Eliomylia						
Palaepaphos		3	33	23	32	11
Skales						
Palaepaphos			13	8	12	3
Plakes						
Palaepaphos						1
Kato Alonia						

There are 23 burial areas across Palaepaphos, only 13 of which have been recorded in sufficient detail to form part of any analysis. Despite the fragmentary nature of all the data from Palaepaphos, they provide clear insights into mortuary practices from the LBA to the CA. Here, I focus on the LBA intramural burial areas, the CG–CA burials at Palaepaphos *Skales* and *Plakes*, and the CA burials of Palaepaphos *Kato Alonia* and *Eliomylia* (Table 33.2 and see Figure 33.5 below) (Janes 2008: ch. 4).

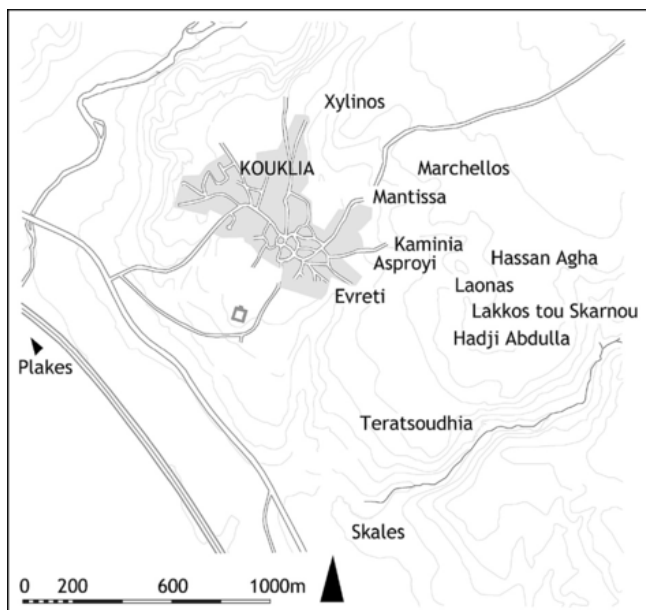


Figure 33.5. Map of the Palaepaphos area, detailing the spatial distribution of Cypro-Geometric and Cypro-Archaic sites discussed in the text (after Bezzola 2004: map 1) (Sarah Janes).

Changing Identities and Sociopolitical Development on the East Coast of Cyprus

Site Overview and Timeline

Enkomi was an established, and perhaps the dominant, economic and political force on the island during much of the LBA. Discussions concerning the exact role Enkomi played on the island at that time are manifold (summarised in Knapp 2008: 336–37; 2013: 433–37). For the present analysis, it is important to note that the town was extensively involved in international trade throughout the LBA, with distinct evidence for increasing interactions throughout the eastern Mediterranean (Steel 2004a: 155; Crewe 2007).

At the start of the eleventh century BC, there was a

deliberate shift in settlement from Enkomi to Salamis, approximately 3 km to the northwest. The main impetus for this shift was most likely the silting up of Enkomi's harbour, combined with the draw of the large natural harbour at Salamis to the north and the potential for the continuing exploitation of existing trade links (Lagarce 1993: 91). This settlement shift was a relatively gradual process, indicated by continued activity in the Sanctuary of the Ingot God at Enkomi for several years after Salamis had been founded, and by the presence of eleventh-century BC pottery across the Bronze Age site (Iacovou 1998: 810; 2005a: 131; see also Karageorghis 1969: 22).

Until the seventh century AD, Salamis was the pre-eminent town on the east coast of Cyprus (Iacovou 2005b: 25). Limited soundings and pottery scatters indicate a high level of urban organisation from the eleventh century BC onwards, including a defensive wall, roads, houses, a sanctuary and burials (Iacovou 2005b: 26; see also Yon 1980: 18; 1999: 17). There is also evidence for urban features, including organised religion in the form of worship to a male deity (Iacovou 2005b: 26; see also Yon 1993: 144, fig. 4); local craft specialisation in pottery and other artefacts, including bronze and iron items and Levantine and Aegean style jewellery (Yon 1971; 1999: 19); and trade in the form of imported metals and foreign pottery types (Iacovou 2005b: 26). The continued presence of competitive elite descent groups at CG I and CG II Salamis suggests that the settlement was not a fully formed state at this time (Iacovou 2005b: 34).

During the CG period, internal and external connections developed and changed in response to continued upheavals across the Mediterranean, not least of which was the struggle for power in the east and the rise of the Assyrian state. Salamis's geographical position on the east coast helped to promote Cyprus's key role in international relations during the Iron Age, just as Enkomi's had done during the LBA. Interpretations of Cyprus's role in the Near Eastern sphere have, again, focused on the impact of external peoples on the island, neglecting intra-island

dynamics. It is generally believed that the Phoenicians founded a trading post at Kition during the ninth century BC. This foundation was likely in response to Neo-Hittite and Aramaean princes taking control in the Levant during the ninth–eighth centuries BC, curbing Assyrian domination, blocking Phoenician access to the east and forcing their westward expansion (Bikai 1989: 205–207). It has been suggested that this ‘colonisation’ stimulated the creation of Cypriot elite-controlled trading ventures, and that the Archaic-period city kingdoms were formed ‘under the pressure of economic contacts and exploitation from an existing state’ (Rupp 1987: 154–55; 1998: 217). Once again, much of the evidence centres on the perceived ‘ethnicity’ of certain aspects of the material data – in this case, the presence of certain ‘temples’ dedicated at Kition to the Semitic deities Astarte and Melqart (Coldstream 1985: 51–53; see also Karageorghis 1982: 123).

Debate has also centred on the nature of the Assyrian relationship with Cyprus at the start of the Archaic period (see Knapp 2008: 341–47). The use of Near Eastern iconography and burial practices in mortuary contexts at Salamis from CG III has previously been used to support the suggestion of Assyrian domination over the island. Accordingly, the mortuary practices of the Cypriot ruling class are seen to emulate and imitate their Assyrian monarchs and other powerful neighbours (Reyes 1994: 63). The impact on the island of the power struggles to the east is far more complex than these interpretations suggest. The symbols, artefacts and practices employed in eighth-century BC burials at Salamis were adopted and adapted by the Salaminian ruling line to create a new hybridised ideology that suited their own needs, borrowing from a vast array of materials and practices available to them from the Near East, Egypt, the Aegean and beyond.

A Period of Change: The LBA–EIA Transition

The end of the LBA at Enkomi (LC IIC/LC IIIA) was a time

when the site enjoyed its ‘greatest archaeological visibility’, yet there is still no consensus about its sociopolitical organisation (Crewe 2007: 11). Evidence from the mortuary record suggests that competition for control was based around elite group and kinship ties, what Keswani (2004: 85) terms a ‘heterarchical pattern of local hegemony’.

Throughout the LBA, a discrete section of the community was buried in built chamber tombs within the city walls (*Ayios Iakovos*; Figure 33.3), whilst the majority of people appear to have been buried extramurally under a ridge to the north of the city (Crewe 2004: 31). The intramural tombs were often placed under buildings and in courtyards, sometimes in boundary places such as doorways or passages. They were reused several times over many generations and there is evidence for restricted access or what Fisher (2009: 189–90; this volume) terms ‘private-exclusive’ rituals. Some of the built tombs appear to have been deliberately destroyed, sealed and emptied (in Dikaïos’s Areas I and III), whilst contemporary tombs in the area remained in use (Crewe 2004: 33–38).



Figure 33.3. Late Bronze Age intramural built tomb at Enkomi (photo by Sarah Janes).

These built tombs were those of the elite, kinship groups who used mortuary behaviour as one method of negotiating their position within the social and political hierarchies of Enkomi. Through the manipulation of mortuary behaviour, they emphasised the power and legitimacy of their ancestral lines and created and maintained interfamilial competition (Crewe 2004: 37–38; Keswani 2004: 158–59; Fisher 2007: 288). Different aspects of mortuary behaviour played different roles in these ongoing negotiations. For example, the use of intramural, built tombs and private-exclusive rituals served to emphasise social differentiation between the elite and the rest of the community. Restricted access rituals also sent a clear message to other elite groups, depending upon whether or not they were included in the observances. The deliberate positioning of built tombs inside the walls, under houses and in liminal positions helped to establish power inequalities, playing out the complex negotiation of social boundaries (Fisher 2007: 289) through the use of physical ones (Keswani 2004: 87). The multiple reuse of tombs would have helped to establish a group's legitimacy within the wider community through their ancestral links, and the destruction of other elite tombs would have sent strong messages about each group's control and supremacy at any given time.

During the final phase of the LBA (Late Cypriot IIIA), there was a significant addition to the burial traditions of Enkomi – intramural shallow pit or shaft graves (e.g. tombs 13, 15 and 16; see Schaeffer 1936). Whilst a small number of elite built tombs continued to be constructed and some original tombs were reused, this new tomb type became increasingly popular (Keswani 2004: 97). The quantity of shaft tombs was relatively low – only 28 burials in all (Keswani 2004: 97) – indicating that this was not a new form of burial for the majority of the population. Significantly, unlike the chamber tombs, the shaft tombs contained only one to three burials, perhaps indicating a move away from the promotion

of ancestral or kinship lines towards smaller group identities. It is significant that despite these seminal differences, some of the LBA shaft tombs contained a range and character of goods similar to those deposited in the built tombs. Major changes to traditional mortuary practices, such as the use of new architectural styles, can be a decisive statement about the identity of the people being buried, the people burying them and their perceived or desired positions within the community. Contemporary use of different tomb types within a single burial area may reflect group differentiation (see, e.g., Georganas 2002), and the spatial arrangement of tombs may signify the tolerance or otherwise between different groups (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 108; Voutsaki 1998: 42–43).

There are many potential explanations for the appearance of these new burial practices at LC IIIA Enkomi. Possibly they belonged to people from other areas of the island who settled at Enkomi, drawn to the town by its increasing prosperity but lacking kinship associations that might be reflected in their burial practices (Keswani 2004: 97–98; Crewe 2007: 25). If this were the case, the similarities in tomb goods to those of the built tombs, and the placement of the new burial type within the city walls, may indicate that the newcomers adopted some aspects of established burial practices into their own traditions to help position themselves within the existing social hierarchy.

Alternatively, burials at Enkomi may have taken on a new or reduced role in sociopolitical negotiations at the end of the LBA/start of the EIA. Funerary ritual is by no means representative of all social practices at any given time (Barrett 1988: 30; Keswani 1989: 27; Cohen 2005: 1). At LBA Enkomi, other settings, including the emergent court and temple institutions, were becoming important arenas for social interaction (Keswani 2004: 143–44). Similarities in burial goods in both tomb types, and the apparent lack of competition over elite-only intramural burial space, suggest that the same elements of society were represented in these new tombs. The tomb architecture of existing elite burials may have become less labour intensive, catering to smaller

family groups, as kinship ties began to be promoted in different arenas of social interaction.

The EIA at Salamis

Towards the end of the LBA, a new, ‘entrepreneurial’ society began to emerge along Cyprus’s east coast. New and renewed internal and external connections led to an increase in competition between elite groups for trade links, profitable connections and local resources, such as the metal sources at Tamassos (Iacovou 2002: 79; Steel 2004a: 170), or perhaps those near Palaepaphos (Iacovou 2012). The power of elite groups began to change as the geographical, social and political landscapes shifted; this is reflected in new, hybridised burial practices at CG I Salamis. There are limited burial contexts for the early occupation at Salamis in CG I – only tomb SToZ-T1 has been fully excavated and recorded (Yon 1971) (see Figure 33.4) – yet the extant remains for this period provide crucial insights into the sociopolitical landscape.

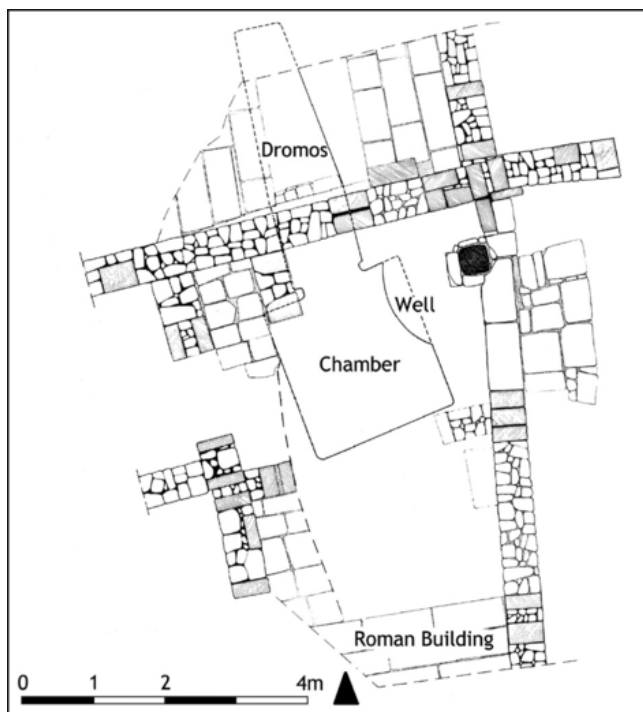


Figure 33.4. Plan of tomb SToZ-T1 under a Roman building, illustrating how the early tombs were built over by the expanding city (after Yon 1971: pl. 4) (Sarah Janes).

SToZ-T1 contains a single interment accompanied by 30 items of precious metal, including jewellery, toilet items, decorative ornaments and a golden scarab. Bronze and iron weapons and a plethora of seals and amulets in various materials also contributed to the conspicuous wealth of this tomb (Yon 1971). This tomb illustrates well the diverse influences to be seen at Salamis in the eleventh century BC – from the Aegean, the Levant and Egypt. The deposition of more than 70 cups in the burial suggests that a large group of individuals was involved in the funeral itself, likely in the context of drinking rituals. This is further attested by an amphoroid krater and a vase support. The presence of cooking wares in the burial assemblage may indicate the preparation of food for feasting activities either at the tomb or in another setting nearby.

The tomb assemblage of SToZ-T1 was of a similar character to the burial goods in both the built tombs and in the shallow pit graves from LBA burials at Enkomi Ayios Iakovos (Keswani 2004: 124–29; Janes 2008: 307–308), indicating some level of continuity between the population buried at Enkomi and those interred at CG Salamis. This tomb most likely represents the move of a distinct elite kinship group from one town to the other (Janes 2008: 307). Whilst the character of the assemblages was similar, however, the goods were significantly richer and the mortuary rituals more inclusive at Salamis. Furthermore, this burial was extramural (placed just outside the city walls) in a new tomb construction – the chamber and *dromos* tomb (with an entrance or literally ‘road’ into the tomb). The similarities and differences between this tomb and the LBA Enkomi burials were undoubtedly intentional, carefully chosen to promote different aspects of identity as elites adapted to the new spirit of entrepreneurial competition.

The new tomb type and extramural burial areas were an island-wide phenomenon in the CG period. Their

significance, whilst largely elusive, appears to have varied between regions (Janes 2008: 326); at Salamis, the burying group used these new developments to their own advantage. Burial outside the town would have necessitated the movement of the body, perhaps involving a procession, affording the opportunity to showcase the burial assemblage. Hereditary links to the LBA town were deliberately referenced in the choice of burial goods deposited in the CG I tomb in an attempt to legitimise their new, sociopolitical position.

Death rituals afford people the chance to contest offices and materialise ideologies whether they are the ruling or non-ruling group (Cohen 2005: 19). Rituals involving the consumption of food and drink can be particularly powerful (Hamilakis 1998; 1999; this volume; Steel 2002: 110; 2004b: 281); eating and drinking involve ‘emotions, pleasures and feelings’ (Hamilakis 1999: 39) and act as powerful mnemonic devices (Hamilakis 1998: 122, 128; 1999: 40; this volume). The inclusion of more members of the community in mortuary observances indicates that mortuary practices played a significant role in elite power politics as competition for local resources and overseas trade links intensified; these new practices would have helped to establish a new frame of reference on which the social history of the community could be built.

Emergence of a City-Kingdom: Creation of an Ideology, Hybridised Burial Practices

In CG III, competition for control over the island’s resources and profitable trade links reached a climax. The wealth and power of Salamis became firmly established in the hands of a small number of individuals within a new ruling lineage (Janes 2008: 309). This moment reflects the decisive move away from kinship power politics into a centralised institution of rule, and can be considered the moment that the city-kingdom of Salamis was fully established. At this time, a new monumental burial area, which held the so-called Royal Tombs, was established on the flat plateau to the west of the town. All aspects of these tombs and the

rituals associated with them were designed to legitimise the pre-eminence of the dominant ruling power. The burials played a central role in the materialisation of a new ideology, every aspect designed to promote messages to locals, foreigners and people from across the island. Of these messages, the most significant are the explicit statements of power and control aimed at other elite groups within and beyond the town, and at Salamis's powerful neighbours: this new city-kingdom was a serious international player in the ever-intensifying trading spheres of the eastern Mediterranean.

The Royal Tombs were stone-built monumental chamber and *dromos* constructions. Each tomb had a large *dromos* leading to a relatively small chamber in front of which many of the tombs had a deliberately elevated ritual area, e.g. SRT-T47. Intensive looting at the site affected many of the tomb chambers, and as a result, most data for the Royal Tombs come from *dromos* assemblages (Karageorghis 1969: 50). Evidence for ritual activities around the tombs is extensive, from the size of the *dromos* – which likely provided a viewing platform at the funeral – to the goods deposited within it. Each *dromos* contained an overwhelming quantity of artefacts including wooden furniture, metal items including giant cauldrons and *obeloi* (iron spits), and a large number of pottery vessels. The most prolific artefacts were bowls, deposited in the hundreds in each *dromos*. The *dromos* of SRT-T79, for example, contained 150 bowls and dishes of different sizes, some containing chicken bones, fish bones or eggshells (Karageorghis 1969: 97). Jugs, jars and *amphorae* also featured heavily, along with other pottery vessels often deposited in large quantities, e.g. 46 basins in the CG III *dromos* context of SRT-T79. All the *dromoi* of these earliest Royal Tombs contained evidence of horse sacrifices, including skeletons and horse and chariot trappings.

The distance of the burial area from the town would have necessitated a long funerary procession; this was a strategic step towards the creation of a powerful new funerary ideology. Mortuary processions provide an arena for overt conspicuous display and can create a highly charged

environment. The wealth of goods in the *dromoi* and the array of chamber goods recovered from the tombs suggest that the adornment of the body and the quantity and quality of artefacts would have allowed pre-eminent members of Salaminian society to assert their power, wealth and influence through extraordinary visual and audible displays. Furthermore, the procession may well have involved a large proportion of the Salaminian population, as well as visitors and emissaries from other parts of the island and from overseas. The capacity of the funeral to motivate such a large group of people attests to the power and influence of the ruling line (Huntington and Metcalf 1979: 139; Keswani 2004: 9).

Monumental stone tombs of this size had not been seen on the island previously. Their size as well as their permanence and strategic position on the landscape ensured that they were highly visible to local inhabitants, to visitors from across the island who would pass through or by the tombs to enter the town, and to foreigners who would have seen the magnificent monuments on the horizon as they approached the harbour. The position and design of the tombs ensured that they, and the ideology associated with them, would have been communicated across both distance and time (for discussion of similar burials at Ur, see Cohen 2005: 14).

With small chambers, large *dromoi* and elevated platforms, the tombs were designed to accommodate a host of mortuary practices and to provide a viewing platform from which these could be observed (Rupp 1988: 122). The vessels found in the *dromoi* indicate that there was a large element of personal participation in the funerals, probably involving the consumption of food and drink, the offering of gifts and theatrical, emotive displays including the stoning of animals that had been part of the funeral procession (Janes 2008: 258–74, 314–17). Large-scale feasting and drinking in a mortuary context is a powerful instrument for the construction of social identities and for establishing community cohesion by creating bonds of friendship or obligation (Steel 2004b: 281; Blake 2005: 107). Such rituals can also be used to emphasise social differentiation by

associating particular ritual actions with the group or individual providing the feast (Fisher 2007: 266–67). Through the use of communal feasting and drinking, the Salaminian ruling line would have imbued the tombs with power and wealth, creating the impression of communality whilst also marking boundaries. Social hierarchies would have been re-emphasised through the uneven distribution of food or the consumption of different foodstuffs (Blake 2005: 106–107), at the same time creating debts of duty or obligation through their generosity and the provision of ‘embodied pleasure’ (Blake 2005: 107; see also Hamilakis 1999: 40; Steel 2004b: 283).

The practices, vessels, materials, iconography and other artefacts in the *dromoi* of these tombs demonstrate the extremely diverse range of influences the Salaminian ruling line adopted into their burial repertoire. Wooden furniture inlaid with ivory reflects Assyrian, Syrian and Phoenician influences. Bronze bowls, ivories and terracotta candelabra are all part of the Assyrian repertoire, as seen at Nimrud (Mallowan 1978; Reyes 1994: 63). Horse sacrifices imitate rituals from elite Assyrian burials and also have precedence in tombs at Marathon, Nauplia and Argos in Greece, Osmankayasi and Gordion in Anatolia, and elsewhere (Karageorghis 1965; 1967: 17). Jewellery, such as diadems and mouthpieces, and their iconography, including lions and sphinxes, show notable Near Eastern inspiration. Scarabs, seals and amulets represent a distinct Egyptian influence, and, finally, Aegean pottery and burial practices were included in the Salaminian burial repertoire, including cremation and offering pyres (Janes 2008: ch. 6). All of these elements were adopted and adapted to help represent the ruling lineage at Salamis as they wished to be perceived. The wealth deposited in the Royal Tombs emphasised that the Salaminian rulers had as much disposable wealth as did their powerful neighbours (Karageorghis 1969: 14) at a time when ‘state-controlled markets’ (Iacovou 2005b: 27; 2006b: 317–18; see also Rupp 1988: 111) emerged in the Near East. These burials were ‘an assertion of ... pride, dignity and equality’ (Karageorghis 1969: 14–16; Rupp 1988: 112), particularly in relation to other polities operating in the

same trading spheres at this time.

It is important to note, however, that it was not just foreign elements that were adopted into the hybridised burial practices of the Royal Tombs. It is evident that many practices employed by the CG III Salaminian ruling line had their origins in Cypriot practices – in particular, those observed in the LBA burials at Enkomi, such as drinking rituals. These rituals had already been adapted to suit the ideological needs of the CG town and were adapted further at the end of CG III to create a new frame of social reference with the ruling lineage at the centre; the rituals had developed in scale, in audience and in the messages they were intended to convey. By the end of the EIA, power inequalities between leading elites, as seen at Enkomi and during the early years at Salamis, had become power and wealth inequality between the ruling line and the rest of the community; in this development, the creation of a new burial ideology had played a central role.

Regionalism and Cross-Island Hybridisation

I have demonstrated the complex interactions underway at Salamis at the start of the IA, exploring how the emergence of a city-kingdom was strongly influenced by the prevailing sociopolitical environment. Central to this is the awareness that sociopolitical development across the island was a direct result of unique connections between local, other island and non-island communities.

Unlike the turbulent mortuary record of Enkomi and Salamis, that of Palaepaphos illustrates a gradually shifting sociopolitical trajectory across the EIA. New architectural features were introduced, and there is evidence for the hybridisation of local and foreign materials and practices, as well as a shift from intra- to extramural burial areas. Yet the mortuary record reflects 350 years of gently fluctuating sociopolitical development (Janes 2008: 157). To explore this idea further, I consider the city-kingdom of Palaepaphos on the southwest coast, which emerged in response to

different internal and external pressures.

Palaepaphos: The LBA–EIA Transition

Palaepaphos is one of only two towns on Cyprus with evidence for continued occupation across the LBA–EIA transition. Data for the LBA at Palaepaphos are fragmentary – around 53 tombs have been excavated and recorded, but a large quantity of this material was found in pits and dumps, the result of looting activities, intentional removal of items from their original contexts and other indeterminable disturbances (Catling 1968: 165; Janes 2008: ch. 4). Nonetheless it is possible to characterise LBA mortuary behaviour generally. The evidence for elite group competition at Palaepaphos in the LBA is similar to that of LBA Enkomi: tombs were placed within the settlement, some under domestic areas and some under workshops. Keswani (2004: 88) suggests that this was a response to interfamilial competition and a tactic employed to validate claims on workshop space. As at Enkomi, the Palaepaphian tombs were used to emphasise hereditary rights. In particular, they reflected inherited rights to the land (Manning 1993: 48) and emphasised the role of groups in the agricultural prosperity of the community – e.g. depositing ground stone tools and other functional items. The burial assemblages also point to rising specialisation, increasing overseas contacts and growing urban prosperity, demonstrated through the deposition of restricted items such as precious metals, e.g. gold and silver (tomb PPEv-T8), unusual goods such as the hippo and elephant ivories (tomb PPE-T119, and particularly the burials at *Teratsoudhia*; Karageorghis 1985: 909–11). Together, the range and quantity of items in these LBA burials formed a ‘distinct complement of status symbolism’ (Keswani 2004: 85). These symbols were carefully chosen to reflect the past, present and future in a form that enabled groups to engage in the complex social competition of the time (Manning 1998: 40).

During the CG period, burial areas at Palaepaphos became extramural (Figure 33.5). Palaepaphos *Skales*, *Plakes*, *Xerolimni* and *Lakkos tou Skarnou* are located at a

considerable distance to the north, east, southeast and southwest of the main part of the site, reflecting a significant shift in the social landscape (Janes 2008: 146; see also Maier and Wartburg 1985: 152). The prominent positioning of the burial areas in boundary positions – inland as well as towards the sea – suggests that the Palaepaphian community was equally, if not more, concerned with intra-island tensions and a perceived threat from other islanders as they were with incomers from beyond the island. These boundary burial areas asserted a new, collective identity. In the EIA, therefore, distinct kinship and family groups came together in these collective burial areas; the requirement for a community bond transcended the importance of LBA interfamilial competition. This move resulted in the loss of an important means of social interaction and renegotiation of sociopolitical positions, weakening the power bases of the elite groups. By CG II, the community burying their dead in the collective burial areas were demonstrating ‘social and cultural proximity’ (Iacovou 2005a: 131) based upon family associations. This decrease in social differentiation paved the way for the emergence of a pre-eminent ruling group at the start of the CA period.

Palaepaphos: The Cypro-Archaic Period

At the start of the CA period in Palaepaphos, as at Salamis, we see the decisive shift to the city-kingdom. Unlike Salamis, however, Palaepaphos did not have a single lineage burial area or ‘royal’ necropolis (Iacovou 2005b: 34). Instead, burials were placed in old LBA funerary areas such as *Eliomylia* and new ones such as *Kato Alonia*.

The extramural CG burial area at Palaepaphos remained in use throughout the CA period; the need to convey a strong community identity to other islanders and outsiders endured. The people using the burial areas clearly posed no threat to the emerging ruling line; the remnants of the LBA competitive elite groups had been assimilated into a new collective identity between CG II and the CA period, becoming part of the ‘securely established, culturally homogeneous and ... prosperous communities’ (Iacovou

2005a: 12). This was in contrast to the situation at Salamis where a physical and ideological break was instigated by the ruling lineage in the CA period. To the new rulers at Salamis, the old CG tombs represented a continued threat from powerful elite groups, and so they enforced a physical move of burial areas from the CG area outside the city walls to *Cellarka* and *Koufomeron*. The old CG burial areas were built over as the city expanded, thereby removing all links to the social and political organisation of the preceding period and creating a new framework of sociopolitical reference (Janes 2008: 317). The tomb assemblages at *Cellarka* in the CA and CC periods contained restricted pottery vessels and goods, reflecting a further enforced change in mortuary behaviour, and limiting the opportunities for sociopolitical negotiations of the old elite families (Janes 2008: 317–20).

At Palaepaphos, several distinctive burials can be identified as those who held positions of centralised power during the CA period (see Table 33.3). Three of these come from *Eliomylia*, and all were impressive, energy intensive burials. For example, the façade of tomb PPE-T125 had been carved, the *stomion* (entrance to the tomb) carefully dry-walled shut, the fill of the *dromos* sieved and sorted before being used, and the whole filled with extremely rich burial goods (Hadjisavvas 2001: 89–90). The positioning of these tombs within the LBA burial grounds harkened back to LBA ancestral roots. Similarly, the assemblages made reference to inherited land rights and agricultural prosperity, alluding to the resources on which the ruling line now based their power and pre-eminence in society. This was achieved through the deposition of heirloom objects such as ground stone tools, a practice seen in the LBA but one that had largely fallen out of the funerary repertoire at the start of the CG period.

Table 33.3. Evidence of conspicuous wealth in the Cypro-Archaic tombs at Palaepaphos.

Tomb	Date	Dromos	Chamber
KA-T1/1962	CAI	Horse burial (first burial)	• Pottery: Sheep burial jugs, bowls,

PPE-T125 CAI

amphorae,
including one
Ionian bowl,
one Cycladic
bowl

- Weapons:
including a
bronze shield
fragment,
iron dagger,
bronze
strainer, two
iron fire-
dogs, two
bronze horse
frontals, iron
horse bit

- Jewellery:
including
three bronze
fibulae,
bronze
bracelet,
faience bead,
blue paste
scarab, thin
sheet of gold

- Many silver
items

- Jewellery:
including
rock crystal
beads

- Household
goods:
including
ground stone
tools, bronze
vessels,
including a

PPE-T8/PPE- CA T7 Goods combined because the tomb assemblages are jumbled together	Teeth and bones suggesting a horse burial in PPE-T8	bowl, kylix, and tray; the bowl had inscription in the old Paphian syllabary, a piece of slag • Bronze household goods: strainer, cauldron, bowl • Weapons: iron sword, iron knife, bronze knife, bronze helmet • Five iron horse bits, two iron rings
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The CA burials also absorbed elements of CG mortuary practices, particularly from the burials at *Plakes* (tombs PPPI-T146, PPPI-T142) which contained, among other things, *obeloi*, weapons, exotic gold jewellery, cremation burials and sheep sacrifices (Raptou 2000) (Table 33.3). There were also some ‘heirloom’ artefacts found in the *Plakes* tombs, including a figurine head and a trident, emphasising continuity with the LBA (Janes 2008: 113). The similarities between the burial assemblages at *Plakes*, *Eliomylia* and *Kato Alonia* are so striking that it may have been the CG II elite group buried at *Plakes* that managed to gain control of the major resources of the town in CG II/CG III, rising to pre-eminence in the CA period.

Furthermore, the tombs at Palaepaphos almost certainly reflect a detailed knowledge of the Royal Tombs at Salamis and their elaborate mortuary rituals. Many aspects had been adopted and adapted into the mortuary practices of the Palaepaphian ruling line to suit their own ideological needs, albeit on a significantly smaller scale. For example, the CA tombs at Palaepaphos were monumental, chamber and *dromos* constructions. There was community participation at the burials, and animals were buried in the *dromoi*. Despite the pomp and circumstance, however, the most significant element of Palaepaphian mortuary display in the CA period was the re-emphasis of the ruling line's continuity with their LBA ancestors, legitimising their claims to power. The Salaminian ruling line, by contrast, deliberately destroyed any lingering connections to LBA and CG elite group competition.

Conclusion

The original intentions and meaning behind many aspects of funerary behaviour are difficult to ascertain. The symbolism and significance of specific mortuary practices remain largely elusive to modern scholars, existing as we do far beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of the community within which these symbols were originally understood (Hall 1997; Parker Pearson 1999: 33). The erroneous assumption that only a small part of the funerary experience is identifiable in the record, and that mortuary data alone, without other contextual evidence, are insufficient for an analysis of social and political change, has been challenged. Close examination of the EIA mortuary record has revealed a vibrant period of dynamic social and political change. Mortuary practices at all sites on Cyprus were the product of their own unique entangled connections and social, political and economic situations. Shifting identities in the mortuary record of the EIA can truly highlight how people, materials and ideas came together and were transformed on the island of Cyprus, and how material culture played an active role in the renegotiation of island identities.

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34 The Violence of Symbols: Ideologies, Identity, and Cultural Interaction in Central Italian Cemeteries

Mariassunta Cuzzo

Abstract

This chapter examines cemeteries to investigate the complex dynamics of ethnogenesis and the construction of collective identity and elite group ideologies in central Italy during the First Iron Age and the so-called Orientalizing period (ninth–seventh centuries BC). In order to explore complex cultural interactions through burial, I draw on the notion of ‘symbolic violence’ as proposed by Bourdieu and Godelier to investigate group and individual strategies and rituals of power in Iron Age and Orientalizing Etruria. The burial evidence serves to explore selections and ambiguity in the self-representation of ‘princes,’ to analyze gender dialectics in burial customs, age-group dynamics, and symbols of status and power. In this way, I hope to contribute to understanding the dynamics of interaction between Etruscans, Greeks, Phoenicians, and other people from the East in the Tyrrhenian context.

What we may call the social imaginary
..., the way it works, with its privileged
figures and its rejections, its favourite
scenes and its shady zones, the
classifications it enacts through a play
of similarities and oppositions, through
shifts ..., deviations, interferences

between different categories of images.
(Vernant 1984a: 5)

The definition of ‘social imaginary’ as proposed by J.P. Vernant for a different field of archaeological research provides the best introduction to the topics dealt with in this chapter. On the basis of these premises, this chapter looks at funerary ritual to investigate the complex dynamics of the construction of collective and elite group ideologies in central Italy during the First Iron Age and the so-called Orientalizing period. I will focus on the composite archaeological representation characterizing the main cemeteries of Etruria, a region that was a stage for complex cultural interactions (Figure 34.1).



Figure 34.1. Map of Etruria showing the main sites of the region (after D’Agostino 2003).

source of information (D'Agostino 2005) as on the fact that cemeteries are active ritual contexts and an integral part of mentalities, political and religious cosmologies, ideologies, social strategies, technologies of power, identities, and of many other aspects presiding over the production of the social imaginary.

Interpretation of cemeteries should reconstruct the funerary context as constructed by polyvalent performances often extended through time and renewed at regular intervals and aimed at long-term immobilization of social space and time. We should look out for 'silences, gestures, behaviours' (D'Agostino 1985: 52), the deceased's due, and the social, ceremonial, and cultic actions whereby the deceased's image was constructed in collective memory. In each context, community value systems, mental attitudes, and the conception of the border between one and the other dimension inform the codes of the funerary imaginary and its relationship with society.

In funerary ritual, the deceased's group plays a central role. If required by their group's strategy, the dead often became what they had not been in their lifetime (Hodder 1982). A second aspect of fundamental importance is the active role of funerary performance and of the connected material culture as a powerful motor in the reproduction and transformation of the imaginary and the social order. A path toward a 'semiotics of cemeteries' thus implies a passage from the analysis of 'sign systems' to an investigation of modes of 'sign production' (Eco 1975; Cuozzo 2003).

The interpretation of funerary contexts involves several often contradictory and misleading aspects. I have suggested the possibility of contemporary and potentially contradictory action in four principal 'fields of action' of ideologies in funerary representation, connected to different levels of social grouping (Cuozzo 2003; 2007): the field of community action is manifested in rules and interdictions that determine the basic code of funerary language; the action of different or opposed groups is, on the contrary, visible through their differences; the field of 'transversal'

social segments may involve forms of negotiation (gender, age group, ethnicity); the field of individual action may encompass a wide range of ritual, situational, and emotional variations, as well as funerary behavior with exceptional characteristics. This dialectic and the forms in which it manifests itself as one or the other element are strictly dependent on the degree and forms of social control in different historical-political contexts.

In the first place, we need to ascertain whether, on the basis of the mentality and values prevailing in a given social context, priority is given to aspects of social composition and hierarchy, or whether other factors are emphasized (e.g., political, religious, or private and/or emotion). Second, the modes of action of ideologies must be investigated.

From this perspective, I intend to investigate the notion of ‘symbolic violence’ as proposed by Bourdieu (1972) and Godelier (1985; 1999) as a central aspect of collective group as well as individual strategies, and of power rituals in the early Iron Age and the ‘Orientalizing’ period in Etruria. Symbolic violence is a central concept in Bourdieu’s theory, where it goes hand in hand with the concepts of *habitus* and practice:

symbolic violence ... is that form of violence that is exerted on agents with their implicit complicity ... insofar as it is not recognized as violence... [it] is contained in a number of postulates or axioms that are acquired in everyday practice (*habitus*) without needing to be inculcated verbally. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 28–29)

For Bourdieu (1998: 7–8, 43), symbolic violence is exercised through

the purely symbolic paths of communication and knowledge ... and provides a prime

occasion to highlight the logic of domination exercised in the name of a symbolic principle understood and acknowledged both by the dominated and the dominators: a language ..., a lifestyle, and ways of thinking, talking, and acting.

A further line of inquiry concerns the contrast between visible elites and invisible majorities that was highlighted by Ian Morris (1987), when he questioned the demographic and social representativeness of cemeteries. He showed that the exclusive representation of privileged social groups and segments (genders and/or age groups) may depend on political, social, and ideological mechanisms, and these thus should be investigated in each context. Morris's studies of the cemeteries of Attica revealed, for example, a rigid division between elite groups and 'a largely invisible majority' (Morris 1995: 53). Inadequate representation of children in cemeteries (less than 40–50% in preindustrial agricultural societies) is regarded as one of the clearest indications of selective burial. This is something that has hardly received attention at all in Etruscan funerary studies.

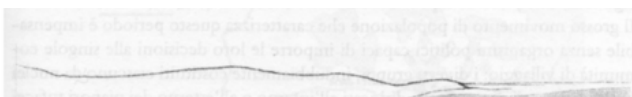
For the Orientalizing period, I see the notions of 'reinvention of tradition' and 'living ancestor' as crucially important (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1984; Helms 1998; Antonaccio 2002; Cuzzo 2003). They imply a cosmology of political and sacral authority that aristocrats play on when they associate themselves with attributes that were previously reserved to ancestors or gods and that are projected into the cosmological sphere through a form of 'heroization.' Controversial subjects such as the definition of 'Orientalization,' kinship groups, and 'princely' status are thus interesting topics for debate.

The Early Iron Age (800–725 BC)

A discussion of Etruscan funerary ritual in the early Iron Age must necessarily start from the major phenomenon of the population concentration during the transition from the

Final Bronze to the early Iron Age. The new extensive settlements were so innovative that no better word has been found to characterize them than the much-discussed term 'proto-urban' (e.g., Peroni 1996; Iaia 1999; Guidi 2000; Pacciarelli 2000; D'Agostino 2005) that alludes to the high level of planning and the sharp separation between 'the society of the living and the community of the dead' (D'Agostino 1985: 47). This separation is a sure sign of a profound change in collective mentality, as the formal establishment of a boundary between the space of the living and the cemetery was a fundamental structuring principle in the rise of the urban form that was acknowledged and complied throughout history (Cerchiai 2005).

Most scholars today believe that the proto-urban phenomenon stands at the origins of the process of ethnogenesis that resulted in the Etruscan cities. In this process, about 80 Bronze Age villages were abandoned around the same time to give way to the south Etruscan centers of Veii, Cerveteri, Tarquinia, Vulci, and Bisentium. These were vast settlements that concentrated large numbers of people on plateaus ranging between 100 and 180 ha in size (Guidi 2000; Pacciarelli 2000; D'Agostino 2005) (Figure 34.3). They were thus naturally defended sites that were usually situated at the confluence of two rivers and in control of broad expanses of agricultural land. A similar development has been traced in mineral-rich north Etruria (Populonia, Vetulonia; Zifferero 2000) and in the interior (Chiusi, Volsinii).



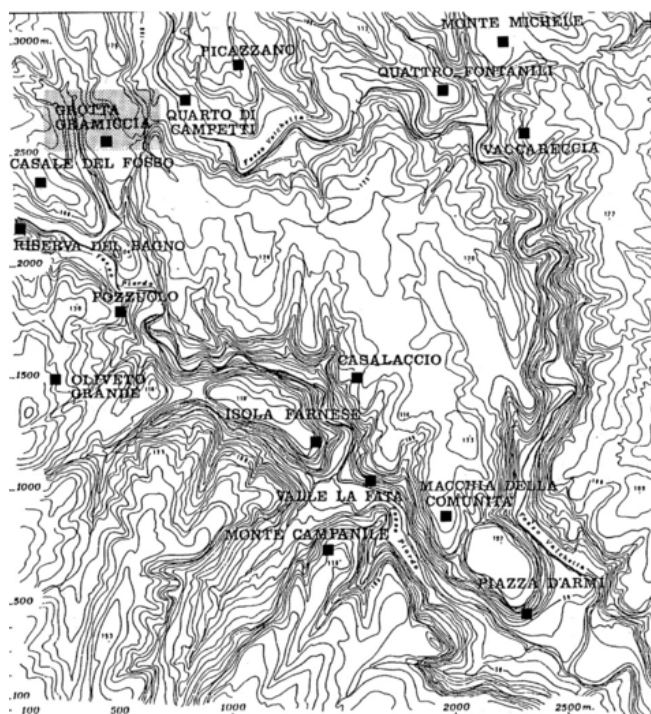
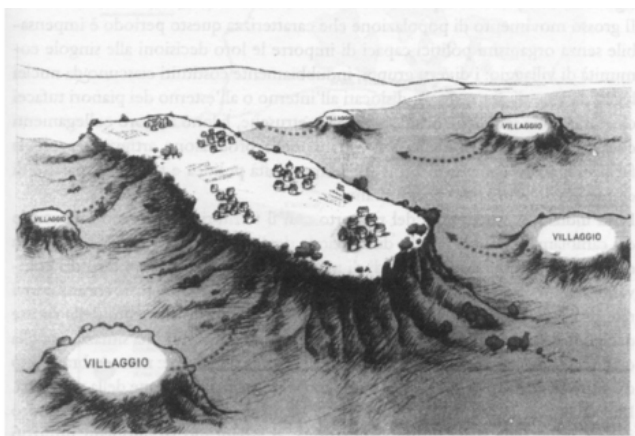


Figure 34.3. Settlements and cemeteries of Veii that illustrate the development of ‘proto-urban’ settlements (after Bartoloni [2012](#)).

The cemeteries extended over the surrounding hills and appear to have been divided into distinct funerary areas, probably pertaining to different kin or social groups. The

EIA1 burial grounds offer a picture of great symbolic impact, as they reflect a selective social imaginary that strives to underscore equality with respect to a shared norm (D'Agostino 2005). The ritual seems based on a pattern aimed at obscuring or denying social asymmetries in burial. Trends in the evolution of funerary ritual and grave good associations seem relatively homogeneous over the whole Etruscan area, notwithstanding some exceptions and local peculiarities (e.g., Bisentium; Delpino 1977).

The basic ritual is 'Villanovan.' It involved cremation with deposition of the charred bones in a biconical *impasto* (coarse ceramic) ossuary covered with a bowl or helmet, sometimes a ceramic imitation of the latter, and it may be regarded as the basic 'normative' layer of the ritual. This pattern can hardly be regarded as innovative, as it originated in the Final Bronze (so-called Proto-Villanovan; Bietti Sestieri 2010). The ossuary is usually placed in a simple pit grave, sometimes within a stone container. In the EIA1, however, practically all signs of 'wealth' or distinction disappeared, and it would seem that funerary ritual played an active part in the deep political reorganization of the time. In other words, 'symbolic violence' took the form of a prevailing of community ideology over the self-representation of groups and individuals, favoring cohesion and uniformity. The apparent prohibition to deposit real weapons in tombs is another clear sign in this regard.

The anthropomorphic shaping of the biconical ossuary is especially significant. This took the form of the helmet-shaped lids and the often conspicuous traces of 'clothing' the urn itself (e.g., the *Tomba dei Bronzetti Sardi* at Vulci; Delpino 1977; 2005; Toms 1996; Iaia 1999). Most scholars tend to regard it as a constant element of Villanovan burial practice, and it has been suggested that the biconical urn may represent or replace the materiality of the cremated deceased, while the breaking of the handle or the presence of a single handle, as at Tarquinia, may indicate the consecration of the object, and hence of the deceased it embodies, to the deity or afterlife (Peroni 1996). Despite the apparent uniformity and equality, there are ambiguities such

as hut-shaped urns, which I will discuss below.

There is wide consensus that the extensive but scattered occupation of the Etruscan proto-urban settlements suggests an egalitarian ideal as an expression of a social warrior group of more or less equal rank that matches the image of early Rome as presented by later Classical authors (Carandini 1997; Pacciarelli 2000). This is explicitly argued to be the case for the so-called *bina iugera*, which are the plots placed under the authority of the *patres familias* and regarded as a form of central political and religious authority similar to the Roman *curiae* (*contra* Torelli 2011: 28–30; Cerchiai 2012). Intriguing as this may be, there remain serious doubts whether Roman social institutions may be regarded as a valid model for the earliest phases of the various Etruscan centers and, above all, whether such a projection actually matches our funerary data. The interpretation of the latter is rather less straightforward when one looks beyond the ‘normative’ aspects and explores the many differences and ambiguities in ritual and social performance. Burial data have after all a multidimensional character that cannot be translated directly into a social structure (D’Agostino and Schnapp 1982; Parker Pearson 1999). As the funerary ideology of the Etruscan EIA recalls a picture of sociopolitical dialectics between collective trends and specific group or individual features and between conservatism and innovation in constant interplay with the criteria of status, gender, and age, there is no shortage of ambiguities and differences.

Several major south Etruscan EIA cemeteries have been discussed in syntheses and other publications (e.g., Guidi 1993; Bartoloni 1997; Iaia 1999; Pacciarelli 2000; Sgubini Moretti 2002; Trucco *et al.* 2005). To examine the issues I have just raised, I will, however, focus on the following cases that I consider particularly significant: Tarquinia (Le Rose, Arcatelle, Poggio Impiccato, Selciatello); and Veii, Vulci (Cavalupo; Osteria; Poggio Mengarelli), while I will use Cerveteri, Bisentium, and Vetulonia for some specific aspects. At Veii, the cemetery of Quattro Fontanili is the one best documented with anthropological analysis of 115

burials (Guidi 1993; Toms 1998), but the earliest phase has been lost to plough damage. Both the EIA1 and the second phase are well documented in the cemetery of Grotta Gramiccia (Bartoloni 1997), where anthropological information is available for 84 cremation burials (out of a total of 799).

The Demographic and Social Representativeness of Cemeteries

The starting point is to find out which demographic and social components are actually represented in the burial grounds in order to understand the impact of funerary selectivity, segregation, and differentiation (Morris 1987; 1995). In Etruria, the available evidence points to a sharp increase of funerary representativeness, which would reflect a shift in mentality from the final phase of the Bronze Age, when burial areas were usually reserved to a very limited number of high-ranking burials (Bietti Sestieri 1996). I believe that formal burial – especially cremation – was reserved in EIA1 and EIA2 to free members of the community, whether male and female, with a possible extension over time of the range of age classes included. It is not conceivable, in my opinion, that cremation burials in formal cemeteries can possibly be ascribed to non-free individuals (Pacciarelli 2000: 270).

The limited anthropological data make it difficult to come to a reliable estimate of age-class percentages, and most investigations remain based on grave good associations, compared where possible to anthropological data (Zifferero 1995; Bartoloni 1997; Iaia 1999; Pacciarelli 2000). The impression is that the lower age groups (infants) were excluded from formal burial but that at least partial access was granted to non-adult age groups (20–30%; Bartoloni 2003). Inhumation burials have partly but hypothetically been attributed to non-adults, both in cemeteries where they were present from the beginning (e.g., Populonia and Cerveteri) and in most other Etruscan centers where they appeared at the beginning of EIA2. The few anthropological

analyses of cremated human remains that have been realized have, however, yielded surprising results such as a significant percentage of double or multiple burials, some including non-adults. Such results warn against generalizations and suggest specific social strategies as well as individual, situational, and emotional behavior under a shared norm.

The Social Construction and Negotiation of Gender

Gender and specific ages have been regarded as the structuring principles of the funerary image as reflected by grave goods and spatial organization. The traditional contrast between, on the one hand, male warriors as denoted by the EIA1 helmet lid, sometimes associated with a razor or ‘serpentine’ *fibula*, and later by weapons, and, on the other, women associated with spinning and weaving as signaled by *fibulae* or brooches of the arc, leech, or ‘arco-rivestito’ types, and ornaments is complicated by age factors and by ritual instruments in some male and female graves. It is not only the available analyses of human remains that point to these complications, but there are also some cases in which traditional gender indicators occur in the same burial (Toms 1998). Such cases should be evaluated within each individual context and especially for children, juveniles, and perhaps older people, the allegedly gender-specific contrast between *fibulae* and ornaments needs careful consideration (Bartoloni 2003). As many burials lack gender indicators or grave goods altogether and are homogeneously distributed by gender and age group, it has also been proposed that the reputedly gender-specific *fibulae*, razors, and textile tools signal rank and distinction rather than gender (Toms 1998; Riva 2010).

Where spatial organization is recognizable (Veii, Tarquinia, Bisentium, Vetulonia; Bartoloni 2003), graves often appear clustered around a pair of male and female burials since the beginning of EIA1 that are associated with grave goods such as the helmet lid, hut-shaped urn, or cult instruments. One suggestion is that these grave pairs were a

married couple (Bartoloni 2003). Despite the conventional emphasis on the adult male warrior encouraged by the EIA1 helmet lids and the abundant EIA2 weapons, the funerary customs and spatial arrangement of cemeteries point to a notable degree of complementarity and dialectic between genders in funerary representation.

Ritual, Cult, Gender, and Kinship

Ever since the EIA1, ritual and cult reflected distinct but parallel discourses in which social distinction is not necessarily associated with the display of wealth but is rather more qualitatively based on a departure from the norm. Ritual and cult are evoked by the anthropomorphic modeling of the ossuary, the hut-shaped urns, and, in a later phase of the EIA1, specific material culture in male and female burials. They suggest a gender dialectic that was connected to both the power of groups and individuals and a relation with the underworld or afterlife, cosmological order, and natural and supernatural forces more generally. The distinctive features include:

- various types of cultic and ritual vases, often decorated with highly symbolic anthropomorphic handles that may represent the deceased, ancestors, or deities (Bietti Sestieri 1992; Damgaard Andersen 1993; Torelli 1997);
- boat-shaped vases or boat models, often decorated with ornithomorphic or zoomorphic protomes, which represent a type associated with the well-known central European theme of the sun-boat (at Bisentium, these boat models are always associated with hut-shaped urns);
- miniature carts drawn by animals;
- knives;
- so-called wheeled incense burners. These are most common in EIA2 (e.g., tomb 6 of Tarquinia-Arcatelle);
- hut-shaped urns;
- grave markers and other forms of monumentalization associated with ritual and group strategies or kinship ties such as networks of tunnels connecting small

shafts at Tarquinia, Vulci, Bisentium; the stone circles (*circoli di pietre interrotte*) at Vetulonia; stone-slab enclosures at Veii; and chamber tombs at Populonia (Iaia 1999; Bartoloni 2003).

Hut-shaped urns, I suggest, are of crucial importance for understanding the socio-ritual and gender dialectics, even if they are relatively uncommon. Who were buried in hut urns? A general study of this type of urn has used grave good associations and, in some cases, anthropological data to demonstrate that they contained the ashes of both male and female individuals, as well as non-adults (Bartoloni *et al.* 1987). In both Etruria and Latium, these ossuaries did not represent innovations, as they were inherited from the Final Bronze Age and remained in use throughout the EIA1 until the eighth century BC. Their deposition in graves might therefore indicate a conservative attitude or perhaps specific individual or group privileges.

At Vetulonia and Veii, hut-shaped urns apparently denote individuals of both genders as belonging to special groups, because many of these urns are found in specific funerary areas such as the so-called *circoli di pietre interrotte* of Vetulonia ('discontinuous stone circles'). The only known hut-shaped urn made of sheet-bronze with studded decoration and appliqués comes from the Osteria cemetery at Vulci. The elaborate decoration with bird-shaped protomes and a sun disk suggests a special sacred function for this object. In the Vulci area, *impasto* urns had a removable base of perishable material, which must have played a particular role in certain rituals, perhaps involving offerings to the underworld. At Bisentium, there are very small hut-shaped urns that may belong to children, while a special ritual significance has been suggested for 'boat-shaped' vessels that occur in some graves (Bartoloni *et al.* 1987).

At Tarquinia, hut-shaped urns were mostly used for male warrior burials such as tombs 16 and 17 of Arcatelle, and thus offer an opportunity to explore gender biases and ambiguities between gender and specific socio-ritual

functions (Iaia 1999). Both burials included both inside and outside the urn status symbols and grave goods such as ‘female-type’ *fibulae* and ornaments, a razor, and spearhead that are traditionally associated with the opposite gender. The few partially preserved bones (tomb 17) have tentatively been identified as belonging to a single female individual (Bartoloni *et al.* 1987: 233). Both burials nevertheless continue to be seen as belonging to high-ranking male individuals (e.g., Iaia 1999), as a double burial indicating certain specific age-group passages, or as the offering of a woman to the (male) deceased. Much less attention has instead been given to the cult and ritual aspects of the depositions that are underscored by bronze tables in both burials and a torch in tomb 17. Given the uncertainty of the anthropological analyses, I believe that the gender of the individuals buried in these urns must be regarded as uncertain.

The hut-shaped urn, meanwhile, is associated by many scholars with the *oikos* (home), *pater familias* (head of household), and new forms of landed property (Menichetti 1994; Torelli 1997), while others have stressed sacred and magical aspects (Bartoloni *et al.* 1987; Colonna 2005) or political authority beyond the family (Carandini 1997). As noted above, however, I would emphasize that it seems far more significant that, in Etruria, hut-shaped urns seem to have been the near-exclusive prerogative of specific groups and used by these group members regardless of gender and age. It is thus possible that these urns represented specific (sacred?) privileges rather than newly acquired powers, and that the few groups allowed access worked with the magical and sacred sphere, ancestors, and deities. It cannot be ruled out, in fact, that such magical and sacred privileges and duties were acquired at birth.

The Construction of Identity and the Representation of Non-Adults

As far as non-adults are concerned, archaeological research has often neglected variations in the funerary landscape that concerned new conceptions of childhood and new norms for

access to formal burial (Moore and Scott 1997; Sofaer Derevensky 2000; Cuozzo 2003). Recent excavation results, as well as anthropological analyses and studies of grave good associations, have, however, yielded unexpected and in some cases surprising outcomes. Fertility, reproduction, group continuity, and strategies to counter high mortality may have been invoked in a range of ways, including differential treatment of the body (cremation or inhumation), exceptional funerary honors such as hut-urns, ossuaries with helmet lids, miniature ossuaries, double burials, and sarcophagi, especially when bestowed on younger age groups (Bartoloni *et al.* 1987; Bartoloni 1997), spatial organization as seen in separate clusters of non-adult burials at Bisentium, Veii-Grotta Gramiccia, Tarquinia-Villa Bruschi Falgari, and other types of ‘symbolic apparatuses.’ It is thus possible that the complex behaviors described in the foregoing denote ritual prescriptions and prohibitions that were observed and imposed by prominent groups to protect individuals and the lineage.

The presence of weapons, certain tools, textile accessories, and sometimes other status symbols have mostly been interpreted in terms of hereditary rank, and tomb HH6–7 at Quattro Fontanili has, for instance, been highlighted because of the spear-head, razor, axe, spit, horse bits, and bronze cup deposited with the burial (Guidi 1993; for similar high-ranking female non-adult burials, see Pacciarelli 2000: 266). These objects may be understood as symbolic tools that compensate or anticipate certain crucial moments in people’s life-cycle-like initiation (Cuozzo 1994), and it would seem possible in this way to explain the peculiarities of juvenile burials (Bietti Sestieri 1992). A series of small metal pendants have likewise been interpreted as precursors of the later Roman *bullae* or badges of nobility worn by Etruscan and Latin male and female children alike (Zifferero 1995). In many cases, therefore, concern with the continuity of the group and the lineage seems to go hand in hand with individual, situational, and emotional factors.

Early Iron Age Phase 2

In the EIA2, which is the eighth century down to 725 BC, the funerary evidence shows the rise of structuring principles that reflect new conceptions of the body and the individual, gender distinctions, and descent. By the end of the period, inhumation had completely replaced cremation, leaving few exceptions such as the Chiusi area. These changes went hand in hand with the prevalence of group and individual strategies over the field of action of the community and the ritual interdictions imposed by the collective norms of EIA1 self-representation.

Cemetery layouts and grave good associations have mainly been interpreted in terms of a generalized increase in wealth, population numbers, and land use of the main Etruscan centers (Guidi [1993](#); [2000](#); Iaia [1999](#); Pacciarelli [2000](#)). The onset of the EIA2 was certainly a decisive stage in the formation of Etruscan aristocracies, as the appropriation and concentration of land and wealth in the hands of a few groups can be regarded as complete by the final phase of the period.

The Etruscans developed formidable economic capacities through the exploitation of the significant mining resources of their territories and trade, as is evident from their contacts and exchanges with Phoenicians and Greeks, mostly from Euboea and the Cyclades, who frequented the shores of south and central Italy from the late ninth century BC. A dense web of relations is documented by the appearance in burials of middle and late Geometric Greek pottery, especially drinking cups (D'Agostino [1999b](#)). The impact of these early contacts on funerary ideologies should not be overestimated, however, as in many cases the earliest Greek vessels were only 'accepted' in female graves or in burials without particular signs of distinction (Guidi [1993](#); Bartoloni [1997](#)). The cultural and political landscape was further enriched and complicated in the course of the eighth century by the foundation of the first Greek–Euboean settlements in the west, namely Pithekoussai and Cumae (Guzzo 2011). The former, in particular, became a hotbed of cultural interaction as both Phoenicians and indigenous Italians joined the island community (Ridgway [2000](#); Cuzzo [2007](#);

D'Agostino and Ridgway 1994). The usual ideological and structural norms of a Greek city-state (*polis*) did not apply, and the island became a key site in the Mediterranean *koine* and Tyrrhenian milieu, as constant and long-lasting exchanges with the Etruscan communities of the coast resulted in ongoing exchanges of people, ideas, and technology, and resulted in extensive phenomena of *métissage* and hybridization or 'middle ground' (Amselle 1990; Buchner and Ridgway 1993; D'Agostino 1999b; Gras 2000; Horden and Purcell 2000; van Dommelen 2006a; 2006b; Malkin 2011).

The later half of this period (EIA2) stands out because of a series of exceptional warrior tombs dating between the second half and the end of the eighth century. These burials featured exceptional panoplies that included a crested helmet, shield, spear, short sword, and pectoral, all of which may be seen as notable status symbols (Iaia 2005). The best-known examples are the warrior tomb at Tarquinia and tomb 871 at Veii (Grotta Gramiccia), which was paired with a female tomb of equivalent prestige.

Quite a few female burials show signs of status that reflect privilege and power in the priestly and sacral sphere, albeit perhaps not exclusively so. The main status symbols are associated with textile instruments and sets of precious ornaments such as axes with a knife, a knife and spits, particular bronze vases such as the tripods with horse figures from Veii-Grotta Gramiccia (Bartoloni 1997), horse bits, incense burners on wheels, and other objects with ritual and ceremonial functions (Figure 34.4).



Figure 34.4. First Iron Age ritual objects (left: after Iaia 1999) and the *carrello* of tomb 2 at Bisentium-Olmo Bello (right: after Menichetti 1994).

It remains unclear what the meaning and role were of enigmatic objects such as the so-called ‘command staff’ or scepter, which some scholars assumed to be similar to the later Etruscan and Roman *lituus*, which was a prime symbol of sacred authority and political power. It is in any case worth nothing that they have been found in both male and female burials, which has resulted in varying interpretations of their role.

Equally remarkable is the variable distribution of imported objects, notably Greek ones: sometimes they appear mostly

in female burials, as at Quattro Fontanili, but at Grotta Gramiccia their occurrence in female tombs is exclusive – and both cemeteries are in Veii. Such behavior may denote negotiation by women (Hodder 1982; Gilchrist 1999) and can be traced back to the EIA when Phoenician imports were associated with other indicators that suggest innovation and mobility in female funerary representation as, for instance, in the already-mentioned *Tomba dei Bronzetti Sardi* in Vulci (Iaia 1999). In some cases, it may be the case that women acted as go-between to introduce innovations initially rejected by conservative males, a pattern observed elsewhere in Italy (Bagnasco Gianni 1998; cf. Cerchiai 1995: 36; 2010: 51–53).

Lineage continuity and the married couple dominate some of the most complex and controversial figurative representations of the transition between the EIA and the Orientalizing period. The ritual *carrello* of tomb 2 at Bisentium-Olmo Bello is a wheeled small vehicle, possibly an incense burner, that is decorated with a scene that shows a male–female couple and a female–male–non-adult triad (Figure 34.4). The explicit sexual symbolism appears to refer to the sphere of fertility and reproduction. The males, including the child, are all armed and the women carry a storage jar and an open vase. The first woman is taller than the male figure, while the second one rests her arm on the man’s shoulder. Some scholars regard the other subjects depicted (hunting and games) as initiation scenes. Others propose that the female figures, especially the first one, should be understood as deities (Menichetti 1994; Torelli 1997). Beyond these uncertainties, we can read the main theme as representing a social cosmology in which high-status women appear as guarantors of agrarian wealth and of the reproduction and continuity of house and lineage, either along men or as alternatives to them. Ever since the First Iron Age, female tombs often express a status above and beyond the norm through attributes, some unique ones, with sacred associations that also point to particular groups and specific prerogatives.

The Orientalizing Period: Reinventing Tradition and Symbolic Violence

In most Etruscan cemeteries, the transition to the Orientalizing period took the form of an act of 'symbolic violence' and 'reinvention of tradition' (Hobbsbawm and Ranger 1984). I elaborated this interpretation in my study of the Orientalizing cemeteries of Pontecagnano (Cuozzo 2003). It is possible that the lead to construct a renewed social imaginary was not taken by newly constituted elites but, on the contrary, by social groups rooted in the long preceding transformation process of the EIA2. They nevertheless did seek to represent themselves as new by reworking ideas, artifacts, technologies, and spatial patterns to express new meanings. An often-underestimated phenomenon is the abandonment of earlier EIA burial grounds, which is well documented in south Etruscan centers such as Cerveteri (Banditaccia, Sorbo, Monte Abatone), Veii (Monte Michele, Vaccareccia, Macchia Comunità), and Tarquinia (Monterozzi, Doganaccia, Macchia della Turchina) (Bartoloni 2003). In my opinion, this is one of the clearest signs of elite attempts to mark their distance from the past and to create a fictitious discontinuity with the EIA. From the late eighth century BC, and especially during the seventh century BC, several dominant groups inaugurate new burial grounds. These groups seem to have sociopolitical and economic power firmly in their hands, while competing among each other for the control of ritual forms and the collective imagination.

The construction of a funerary representation and of an idealized but highly selective material culture exclusively reserved to the elites can be regarded as an obvious instance of 'symbolic violence,' especially as it went hand in hand with the virtual disappearance of subordinate social groups from formal burial and thus effectively reinforced a strict division between a visible elite and a largely invisible majority (Morris 1995; Cuozzo 2003).

The purpose of the new symbolic framework and attire was not just to exhibit power but even more to merge the

group and community relation system with the cosmological sphere, the gods, and the external world, i.e., the Mediterranean. Ideologies conventionally labeled as 'princely' provided the basis for new forms of collective imagination and processes of social reproduction, which took over at a time of crisis of from the older Iron Age symbols. EIA symbolism, even in its expanded form of the final EIA2, was no longer adequate to express the new forms of power, and required a shift in the social imaginary toward an ideology that we may define as that of the 'living ancestor' (Helms 1998; Antonaccio 2002). This ideology aims at 'naturalizing' aristocratic groups' political and sacral authority by projecting their origins in a mythical past and by fabricating their tradition and memory in material culture and power rituals. As in many other contexts, the institution of ancestor ('gentilial') cults and forms of heroization is not so much about reviving and celebrating a distant past but rather about projecting onto the past a cult of elites during and after their lifetime (D'Agostino 2005). The 'accurately selected and largely fictitious past' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1984: 3–4) that accompanied the new social imagination was founded on a symbolic construction that drew on a vast Mediterranean *koine*. As Oriental and more specifically Phoenician and Greek 'icons of power' were massively reworked, the label of 'Orientalization' aptly describes this period (Knapp 2006; 2008; Riva and Vella 2006).

As the notion of 'Orientalization' has become the object of debate and diverging theories (Riva and Vella 2006), some scholars deny the usefulness of the term because of its diffusionist and historical-cultural origins, and because it places too much emphasis on seventh-century BC phenomena and thus overshadows the continuity of older Mediterranean connections. Others, however, have adopted a broader Mediterranean perspective and consider the term a useful synthetic characterization of a phenomenon that is mainly related to the construction of elite ideologies (Knapp 2006; Riva 2010).

Another topic of debate concerns social organization and

rulers in Orientalizing Etruria. According to one widely held view, a patronage-based organization of clans not unlike that of the Roman world, with a leading clan head recognized as *primus inter pares*, existed in Etruria as early as the later EIA and the Orientalizing period (Colonna 2000; Torelli 2011). I cannot but share the concern expressed by some scholars about the risks transposing the historical tradition and language of the Roman *gens* to the Etruscan milieu (Smith 2006; Riva 2010; Cerchiai 2012), let alone applying these categories to archaeological burial evidence (D'Agostino 2005). While it is certainly the case that the adoption of the *nomen gentilicium* (clan name) in Etruria in the Orientalizing period recalls the clan-based organization of the Roman world (Colonna 1977; Torelli 2000), there is no trace in the archaeological record of subaltern or intermediate social classes comparable to the Roman clients. It is, indeed, this contrast between elites and invisible majorities that underlies the present chapter.

Despite these uncertainties, the 'princely' terminology may usefully serve to summarize the complexity of representing the leading figures in the Orientalizing period, as the 'living ancestors,' even if their power was inherited, may be more aptly described as the *principes*, leaders of aristocratic groups competing for political and social hegemony, rather than as kings with centralized authority. It has been argued that Etruscan aristocracies drew on a variety of cultural inputs to build their identity, and that Etruscan society may thus be defined as 'open' (Ampolo 1981) and marked by a high cultural dynamism that is characterized by 'active appropriation,' interaction, and competition, as well as 'métissage' or hybridization (Amselle 1990; Bhabha 1994; D'Agostino and Cerchiai 1999; van Dommelen 2006a; 2006b). Within this complex process of transition, restructuring, and redefinition, the social image is dialectic and dynamic. It appears to have been dominated at the ideological level by elite groups, and the community structure itself appears to have been determined by competition and contrasts between groups (Cuozzo 2003). In the end, it is these dynamics that provided a new stimulus for the formative process of urban society (Cerchiai 2005).

Etruscan aristocracies thus offer a classic example of a funerary ideology based on display, competition, consumption, and destruction of wealth.

Recent debates have rightly emphasized the indigenous roots of the sociopolitical and economic processes that underpinned the rise of the Orientalizing aristocracies and highlight the complex ethnogenetic processes at work since the EIA. It is argued that these were complete by the time of the conventional beginning of the Orientalizing period, when land and property had become concentrated in the hands of a few groups (Guidi 2000; Herring and Lomas 2000; Pacciarelli 2000; D'Agostino 2005). Self-representation in burial was a rather different matter, however, as there is clear evidence that the process was an ongoing one of active and conscious appropriation, reworking, selection, and reinvention. While the influence of the 'Orientalizing-style' Phoenician, Oriental, and Greek ideas and techniques is obvious, the Orientalizing material culture displayed by Etruscan 'princes' is a construct of the aristocratic groups of each Etruscan center, as they consciously selected and elaborated on these Mediterranean inputs to create new imaginaries to immobilize social space and time (Cuozzo 2003). It is, indeed, no coincidence that most of the splendid gold jewelry and precious vases, as well as most of the symbols of power and items of bronze or exotic materials such as ivory, were created by craftsmen working in Etruria (Figure 34.5). Even if they were surely inspired by Greek or Oriental models, they should be regarded as products of Etruscan rather than Greek or Oriental craftsmanship and art (Bartoloni *et al.* 2000; Torelli 2000).



Figure 34.5. Gold pectoral from the Regolini-Galassi tomb (Cerveteri; after Cristofani and Martelli [1982](#)).

The set of symbols conventionally defined as ‘princely’ is partly based on the circulation of gifts among aristocrats (Ampolo [2000](#)) and reinforced and amplified by a manifold increase in craft products. As they denote connections and competition between the elites of the Tyrrhenian area, including the principal centers of Etruria (Cerveteri, Veii, Tarquinia, Vetulonia, Volterra) as much as those of Latium (Palestrina, Decima, Laurentina), as well as the Greek colonies (Cumae) and ‘Etruscanizing’ centers of Campania (Pontecagnano), these symbols reflected a process that transcended ethnic and gender distinctions. It is therefore no exaggeration to claim that the Tyrrhenian elites of this

period were connected by similar luxury material cultures and symbolic discourses (D'Agostino 1977; Hall 1997; Bartoloni 2003; Malkin 2011). They made reference to a 'Homeric' material culture and heroic rituals, as well as to the same ceremonial insignia of power and the sacred (throne, scepter, or *lituus*) and involved ceremonial wine drinking, sacrifices, and meat banquets (Vernant 1984b), multifunctional tool sets, exotic metal products, and carriages. A striking example of the fluidity of ethnic and cultural boundaries between Tyrrhenian elites is the active appropriation of Etruscan shields as lids for the bronze cauldrons that contained the precious urn with the ashes of the earliest Greek colonists of Cumae. The best-known case is that of the tomb 104 (Fondo Artiaco), the 'hybrid' archaeological appearance of which has variously been argued as the resting place of a Greek, Etruscan, or indigenous chief (Cuozzo 2007). Etruscan elites nevertheless also drew on conservative and highly specific local references in rituals and objects used, in particular 'old-fashioned' fine *impasto bruno* wares and innovative ones such as *bucchero* (D'Agostino 1999a; Bartoloni *et al.* 2000).

Living Ancestors

At the heart of the new funerary ideology in Etruria lies a structural and ideological innovation, which is embodied by the monumental tumuli possibly of Near Eastern origin with their chamber tombs. Built to accommodate burials over several generations, these prominent monuments were usually domed, often constructed on a raised basis (*crepido*), and accessed through a long corridor (*dromos*). Together, they are formidable visual and conceptual instruments to inculcate social asymmetry and to achieve a long-term immobilization of social time and space. They are a conspicuous feature as much around the main Etruscan towns (Figure 34.6) as in the countryside, where they represent true 'landscapes of power' (Zifferero 1991).

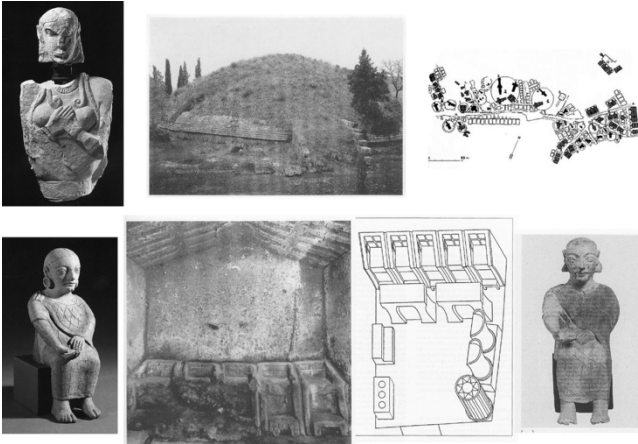


Figure 34.6. The ‘living ancestors’ of the Orientalizing period (from left to right): the Pietrera tomb in Vetulonia, the Banditaccia cemetery, and the tomb of the *Cinque Sedie* in Cerveteri (after Bartoloni *et al.* 2000).

As various scholars have argued, the ritual transposition of the home to the afterlife may have its precursor in the hut-shaped urns of the EIA and the often explicit references to ancestor cults are likely to have been intended to guarantee the continuity of the community (Menichetti 1994; Riva 2010). The elites sought to establish domination over social time and space through the amplification, multiplication, and repetition of ceremonies such as processions, sacrifices, offerings, and ritual banquets that involved both participants and spectators of the rituals performed inside and outside the tomb. The new monumental appearance of the burials with the tumuli and access corridors offered the spaces required for the performances of such rituals (Parker Pearson 1999; Colonna 2005). Images of male and female ancestors moreover provided a structuring principle for many of the tombs. A good example is the *Tomba delle Cinque Sedie* at Cerveteri (Figure 34.6), where five terracotta statuettes represented male and female ancestors seated in front of tables, alongside a small altar for bloodless sacrifices and a food basket for the ceremonial meal. A pair of empty seats has been interpreted as intended for the couple for whom the tomb was made and whose juxtaposition with

their ancestors legitimized and guaranteed the continuity of their kinship group. Other examples are the stone statues representing male and female ancestors at Cerveteri, Vetulonia, Volterra (Casale Marittimo), and the traditional *impasto* ‘canopic’ jars in the Chiusi area (Bartoloni *et al.* 2000) (Figure 34.6).

Grave Goods and the Body between Innovation and Conservatism

In many cases, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fieldwork methods caused the loss of important information about both grave good associations and the persons buried, often including the skeletal remains themselves. The few available instances of anthropological analysis have provided evidence of elaborate rituals and a rich variety of body treatments and thus suggest that the loss of information is substantial. A telling example of the ambiguity of Orientalizing rituals and the coexistence of innovative and conservative drives is offered by tomb 5 in the Monte Michele cemetery at Veii (second quarter of the seventh century BC), which forms the core of a group of later burials (Sgubini Moretti 2002).

Tomb 5 is a square chamber tomb with two smaller rooms opening onto the dromos (Figure 34.7). It contained three or possibly four burials. In the room on the left, a child had been deposited, inhumed and without grave goods, except for three lead sheets. These may have held in place a shroud to cover the body. The room on the right held a cremated young man of 18–20 years old, whose ashes had been collected in an Italo-Geometric jar along with two iron spearheads. There was also a large *impasto dolium* that contained a Proto-Corinthian ovoid aryballos (datable to 670 BC). The main chamber is believed to have been reserved for a couple of ‘princely’ status. It is widely assumed that on the left there was a body of a woman, whose skeletal remains have not been preserved but whose presence has been inferred from ‘female-type’ brooches of precious materials, textile tools, including a knife, and an elaborate set of vases. On the right was a cremated adult identified by the grave

Parker Pearson 1999). In Monte Michele tomb 5, the ‘prince’ was cremated, but his charred bones were reassembled in anatomical order and placed in a cloth pinned with precious *affibbiaglio* (‘fastener’) and ‘serpentine’ *fibulae*. The bones were then placed in a bronze box with a double-pitched roof that recalls EIA burial customs but that had been made in metal and decorated with a Greek-type Gorgon head. The ossuary was in turn placed on a four-wheeled carriage. The funerary ceremony and body treatment were thus defined by both the active appropriation of Homeric ‘heroic’ rites, as preferred by many Mediterranean and Tyrrhenian elites, and a reluctance to accept the loss of the body as a material and connected and indivisible entity (Cerchiai 1995: 86; Bartoloni *et al.* 2000). A similar dialectic between appropriated Mediterranean power symbols and conservatism may be discerned in the grave good associations of burial 5, as they include not only symbols of power and social privilege such as a scepter, weapons, a sacrifice-hearth-banquet set, a grater, and imported Orientalizing-style objects, but also a large typically local drinking and dining set in brown *impasto* and thin-walled *bucchero sottile* wares (Sgubini Moretti 2002).

Visible Elites and Invisible Majorities

An integral part of the ‘symbolic violence’ enacted by Etruscan aristocracies in the Orientalizing period is the virtual exclusion of subordinate social groups from formal burial. Although the absence or low visibility of burials of different social classes may be a partial consequence of a lack of systematic excavations in Orientalizing cemeteries, recent excavations have managed to shed some light on selective burial strategies and have produced tangible evidence of symbolic violence to a large majority of local communities. It thus would appear that the relevance of the funerary evidence is limited to the ideological image fabricated by a restricted elite.

Significant evidence in this regard comes from a group of burials that were brought to light in recent excavations (1988) at Casale Marittimo near Volterra and that are

associated with a nearby settlement site that comprised a palatial structure (Maggiani 2000; 2006) (Figure 34.8). The burial ground is small and self-contained, and is a symbol of social time and space sealed by a very restricted elite: the cemetery is the exclusive reserve of just 10 burials of different types, including a single but unfortunately looted chamber tomb, which cover little more than a century. The burials are all, if variously, defined by signs of prestige and may be ascribed to both male and female members of the same aristocratic household. Non-adults of the first age grades are excluded from formal burial, with a single exception (double-burial tomb G); juveniles are buried in three tombs (G, B, and C). Tomb G stands out because of ceremonial and sacral equipment and especially by offerings associated with fertility and a concern for the reproduction of the lineage.

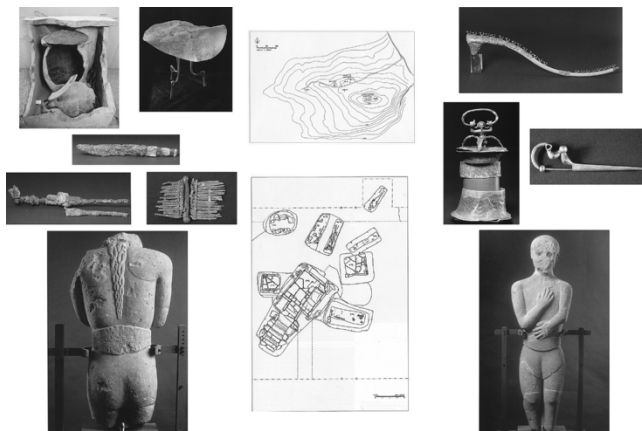


Figure 34.8. Casale Marittimo (Volterra): site plans and some of the grave goods (after Maggiani 2006).

The most plausible hypothesis suggests that the burials clustered around two or three stone cists, namely tombs A (a male cremation of the last quarter of the eighth century BC), E (looted), and C in its first phase. The second cist must have contained prestigious grave goods, judging from a few fragments of ivory, amber, and bronze, and may have been a female burial; the earliest stone cist tomb in this area is a prominent female grave at Badia near Volterra (Torelli 2000:

540; Maggiani 2006). Tomb E has yielded remains of furniture and a ritual meal or offerings, including a remarkable three-legged bronze table and a unique cylindrical vessel showing the underworld (Figure 34.8). The cemetery was given a monumental makeover around the middle of the seventh century BC, when an underground chamber tomb was built that remained in use until the early sixth century BC. Two life-size stone statues in mourning posture stood guard to guarantee the continuity of the lineage and the assimilation of the aristocratic group with its ancestors. Some scholars consider them a male–female couple (Von Hase 2002), but for others they are two males (Maggiani 2000; 2006).

Gender Dynamics and the Representation of Women

Gender is as prominent an aspect of the interpretation of Etruscan cemeteries as elsewhere (Gero and Conkey 1991; Gilchrist 1999; Díaz-Andreu 2000; Cuozzo and Guidi 2013), if not more so given the wider debate about the position of women in Etruria. Scholars have long drawn attention to extensive archaeological, iconographic, epigraphic, and literary evidence that, unlike elsewhere in the ancient world, women in Etruria did not occupy a subordinate role, especially from the Orientalizing period onward (Rallo 1989; D’Agostino 1993; Rathje 2000; Cuozzo 2003).

Recently, however, some of this evidence has been called into question as one-sidedly focused on foregrounding women’s roles at all costs (Spivey 1991; Izzet 2007; Riva 2010), and I therefore propose to examine the issue afresh from a careful examination of gender dialectics and negotiation in Iron Age and later burial customs. Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa (1998) and Arnold (1996) have proposed a gender-based perspective that I find particularly interesting and relevant, as they investigate the ‘semantic ambiguities’ that arise from the overlap between gender and status. In their case-studies, the high-status female gender represents itself through an appropriation, negotiation, and reworking of typically male symbols on the one hand and

iconographic codes usually reserved for female deities on the other. In the remainder of this chapter, I will use their approach to highlighting several Etruscan cases and aspects, although space precludes an exhaustive discussion of women's roles in Etruria.

In Etruscan society, ancestor tombs and images could be both female and male, which raises important questions about competition between elite groups, the perception of women, and descent systems; it could even be interpreted as evidence of bilinear descent (Cuozzo 2003). The ladies of the Regolini-Galassi tomb or the *Camera degli Alari* tomb in Cerveteri (Colonna and Di Paolo 1998) must be understood as the ancestors of the group rather than the princes' wives ('princesses'), as no male individual of these aristocratic groups was allowed to carry the same power symbols (Cuozzo 2003) (Figure 34.9). The high status of women as 'living ancestors' appears to be an integral part of the political and social strategies of groups, whose lineage continuity appears to have been guaranteed in some cases by the female rather than the male line. Elsewhere, however, following a pattern already recognizable in EIA funerary evidence, these privileges seem to signal female agency and complex negotiations.

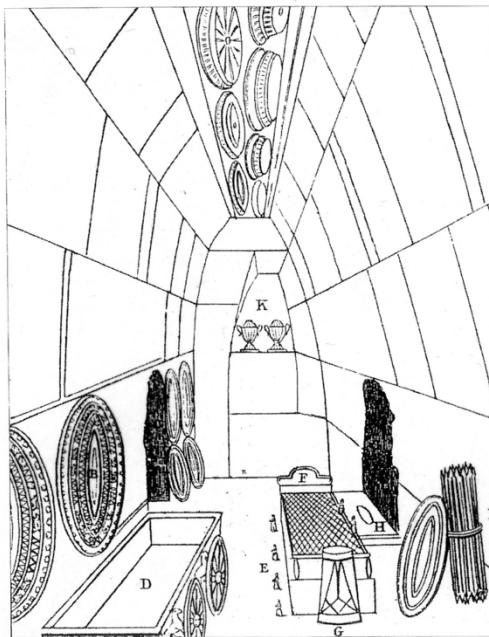
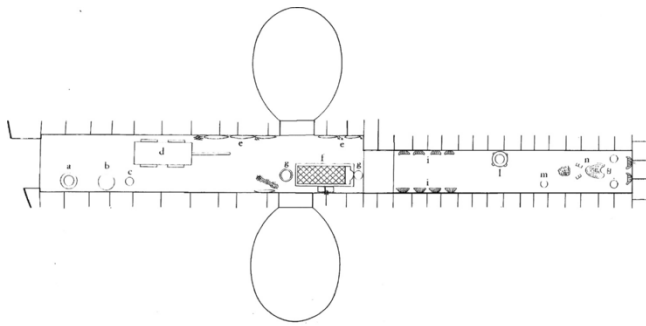


Figure 34.9. The Regolini-Galassi tomb in Cerveteri (after Colonna and di Paolo [1998](#)).

Semantic ambiguities surrounding the appropriation of typically male symbols and the overlap between status and gender symbols are the cause of a number of interpretive controversies. The *Tomba del Tridente* in Vetulonia has, for instance, alternately been interpreted as a dual, female, or male burial (Cygielman and Pagnini [2006](#)), while the Regolini-Galassi tomb in the Sorbo cemetery of Cerveteri has recently been associated with a female ancestor on the basis

of a convincing reconstruction of the burial ritual and its symbolic attire (Colonna and Di Paolo 1998; figs 9 and 10). The plurality of signs of status and prestige, the sacrifice-cum-fireplace set (D'Agostino 1977; 1999a; Vernant 1984b), and the lady's splendid costume and jewelry, including a gold pectoral, all allude to special powers and priesthood (Cuozzo 1994; 2003). Classical authors highlighted the mimetic character of the relationship between gods and their ministers (Holderman 1985), and the splendid attire of these ladies may well demonstrate visually codes usually reserved to female deities as a kind of 'epiphany of the queen and the goddess' (Colonna and Di Paolo 1998: 167). A visual special effect is created by the multiplication of shields along the walls, of which there were eight in total (Figure 34.10). As a typically male sign of warrior rank during the EIA, the shield became a symbol of female empowerment in the Orientalizing period. The female splendor in this tomb contrasts with the sober male cremation burial, deposited in a simple jar with a single spearhead, for whom a relationship of descent may be assumed. The importance of the female line for descent is widely documented in both the archaeological and epigraphic records, as matronyms occur regularly in funerary inscriptions since the Orientalizing period: a famous example is the *Aule Theluske* stele from Vetulonia (Colonna 1977; Bartoloni 2003; Cuozzo 2003). Another striking example is offered by a *bucchero* jug from Veii, probably from the same context as the so-called Chigi Olpe, which bears a remarkable dedicatory inscription by a woman with a female lineage name (Bartoloni *et al.* 2012: 44–46).

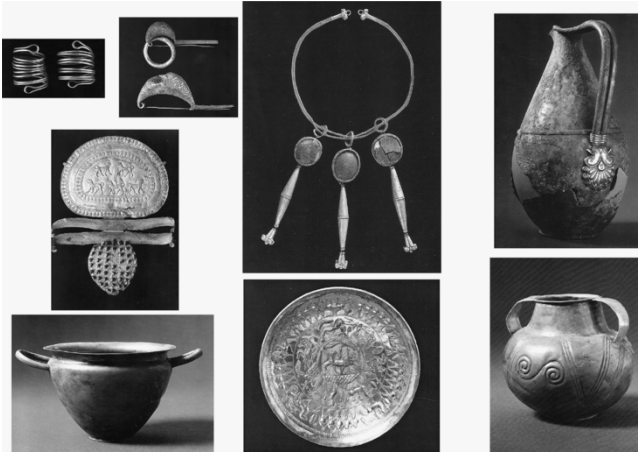


Figure 34.10. Grave goods from the Regolini-Galassi tomb in Cerveteri (after Cristofani and Martelli 1982; not to scale).

The importance of women and the female lineage is attested among very different societies throughout the ancient world and beyond that share a concern with the long-term continuity of lineages and inheritance; this concern may be particularly prevalent among communities ruled by oligarchies (Sordi 1981; Torelli 1997; Fabietti 1999; Cuozzo 2003). Ancient sources mention many cases of uxorilocal marriages of princely or royal rank, especially at critical times of transition. It is therefore tempting and certainly interesting that the construction of female-oriented landscapes of power and the attribution of specific prestige symbols in Etruria could, in certain Etruscan contexts, denote a transitional female prominence in the management of (political?) power, possibly at one of those crucial moments of transition and crisis, which the literary tradition tends to associate with a temporary shift in the balance of power (Rathje 2000; Bartoloni 2003).

Conclusions

The current debate on the interpretation of cemeteries emphasizes that the reading of funerary contexts involves multiple and often contradictory aspects. The focus on ‘symbolic violence’ moreover brings out the dialectics and

tensions between community norms and sheds light on strategies and negotiations deployed by individuals, elite groups, or social groups as defined by gender or age.

Godelier has argued that monopolizing the social imaginary and the imaginary means of reproduction of life and society guarantees power and legitimacy over the mid to long term, more so than wealth or physical violence (Godelier 1985; 1999). As Bourdieu has noted, if we agree that symbolic systems are social products that (re)produce the world, i.e., that do not merely reflect social relations but continuously work to re-establish them, we cannot but admit that 'it is possible to change the world by changing its representation' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 21).

Following Bourdieu (1972; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) and Godelier (1985; 1999), it can be argued that it is first and foremost through forms of symbolic violence that a social order based on long-term aristocratic hegemony may be legitimized or at least have its instability concealed. Symbolic violence is exercised through practice and *habitus*, i.e., everyday practical representation of a balance and an irreplaceable guarantee in social reproduction. A key aspect that I have investigated in this chapter concerns the strategies to control the collective imagination in burial practices in Iron Age central Italy. I have argued that this was achieved by gaining control over society's relations with both the outside world and the sacred (Godelier 1999).

As the many dimensions of symbolic and material culture are part and parcel of strategies to maintain control over the imaginary, the so-called structuring practices of burial and of representing elites as 'living ancestors' may first of all be traced in the tight competition for control over the group's symbolic and sacred heritage, its relationships with cosmological and divine powers, and the web of connections with the Italic, Greek, and Mediterranean worlds. It is my contention that this monopoly over the imaginary rather than mere display of wealth or violence offered elites the best opportunity to maintain their prominence in the medium and long term.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Peter van Dommelen and Bernard Knapp for the invitation to contribute this chapter and for valuable suggestions and advice. My sincere thanks are also due to Bruno D'Agostino and Luca Cerchiai for much fruitful discussion. I am also grateful to F. Poole and especially to Peter van Dommelen for revising my English.

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Ritual and Ideology

Ideology is viewed variously as a system of belief, a discourse of power, a seamless social medium, a body of misrepresentations or the uneasy alliance of representation and reality (Mullins 2004: 202). According to Bloch (1985: 33), ideology is a ‘...system of knowledge ... [that] legitimates the social order by building up schemes about the nature of the world which place authority at the source of all good things’. Ideology is one among many tools with which elites maintain their position (Joyce and Winter 1996). For Barrett (2001), power and social position are materialised in multiple ways, all of which express struggles in a diverse range of ideological forms. Eagleton (1991: 8) shuns a universal definition of ideology, but suggests nonetheless that it is a useful concept through which we may assess socially meaningful power struggles. For some, then, ideology is passive, determined by the way a given society organises its production aspects; for others, ideology is active, something that directly influences politico-economic organisation; still others recognise ideology as a key, material-based, source of social power (DeMarrais *et al.* 1996: 15).

Thus, ideology can affirm and deny at the same time, which explains why it can mystify or invert the actual conditions of existence, especially when sanctioned by force or threat (Bloch 1985: 41). Ideology plays a crucial role when inequalities, or conflict between factional interests, are rife in society (Kreckel 1985: 164–65). Ideology also serves to motivate and regulate the mobilisation of labour, and to provide the rationale and regulations for allocating or

redistributing surplus production (Earle 1991: 8–9; Kolata 1992: 71). Ideology thus plays a key role in establishing social position or political authority, and in validating the economic bases of such institutional structures.

However archaeologists choose to understand it, ideology should not be limited to religious or political belief systems: it is integral to all symbolic systems, to the material and symbolic aspects of social life (Kreckel 1985: 154; see also Hodder and Hutson 2003: 88–89; Kyriakidis 2007). An ideology supporting domination can be sustained in the context of an ideology of resistance by being grounded in the process through which these ideologies are given physical form, i.e. in the materialisation of ideology (DeMarrais *et al.* 1996: 16). Ideology thus has both material and symbolic components that must be continuously maintained and reproduced if they are to preserve their social impact. The symbolic aspects of culture are seen as ideological where they contribute to the mystification, sanctification or legitimisation of specific, special interest groups (Robb 1998: 333–34).

All these elegant if somewhat opaque definitions cannot really inform archaeologists about how meaning and *mentalité* might be found in the material record, or in establishing some sense of credibility in associating material remains with the paraphernalia of power in prehistoric or protohistoric society. At this juncture, it is important to reassert that ‘...ideology is not solely an epiphenomenal reflection of the politico-economic base of society, but rather one means by which groups actively maintain, resist or change their relative power within society’ (Knapp 1988: 139). Because certain social groups make use of materiality to structure power relations within society (Gamble 1986: 39), such transformations are often visible to the archaeologist. Thus, the character and nature of ideology – e.g. where elites allocate resources to establish and legitimise politico-economic institutions – should be indicated by the specific means and materiality employed.

In prehistoric or protohistoric societies, ideology often resides in that special form of human action termed ‘ritual’.

Although rituals are linked to tradition and the sacred, and are thus often seen in static terms, at the same time they serve as acts of power that associate authority with some non-secular source, and are thus potent forces for change (Kelly and Kaplan 1990: 140). When people engage in ritual action, they express a strong, symbolic attachment to a particular point of view; the conservative nature of such rituals gives them formidable power in reaffirming old or legitimising new sociopolitical structures. Since most social, political or religious groups use symbolic representation to integrate themselves, or even to justify their existence, the organisation of such groups may assume some material reality (Fogelin 2007; Chaniotis 2011).

Rituals may also be used to create politico-ideological images, and to establish the association of a certain group of people with these images. By personifying a polity, or even a specific production system, people are able to conceive of (and support) that entity, to recognise its organisational distinction, and to support its integration on a higher organisational level (Kertzer 1991: 87–88). Because rituals therefore both legitimate and generate political authority, they cannot be regarded as secondary to the political economy in the exercise of authority (Kelly and Kaplan 1990: 140). Barrett (1991: 6) argues that ritual (and religious) knowledge is not a separate area of reality, but rather is formed by the same set of material factors as everyday life. Ritual, in sum, makes it possible for people to formulate and develop their ideas about, and images of, appropriate authority structures, and through the mediation of symbols to interpret and understand better both political leaders and sociopolitical action (Blake 2005).

The materialisation of ideology and ritual may take many different forms: monumental architecture (representing labour intensification; Trigger 1990; Kolb 1994), craft technologies, highly ornamental pottery and precious metalwork (Adams 1992: 216–18). To these, we might add textiles, costumes, regalia and colour symbolism (in narrative sculptures, stone objects, wall paintings; e.g. Barber 1991: 205 n. 7, 373–76; Jones and MacGregor 2002).

DeMarrais *et al.* (1996) characterise the materialisation of ideology in much the same ways, but particularly single out public monuments, symbolic objects, writing systems and ceremonial events. Rituals and other events associated with them may be seen as a particularly effective means for negotiating power at all levels: they relate shared experiences for people through their participation in feasts or involvement as actors or viewers in various types of performances. Some of the portable paraphernalia used in performances – e.g. ritual attire, wall paintings, icons and emblems in any form – facilitate symbolic communication and broadcast people's social position, within social groups or between higher-level polities.

The construction of elaborate monuments, and in particular monumental architecture, demonstrates the capacity of elites to deploy massive amounts of material resources, surplus labour and skilled craftspeople. Writing and literacy – e.g. inscribed stelae or monuments, formal documents and contracts, myths and 'histories' – may pertain directly to belief systems, serve to legitimise various claims to authority, or provide opportunities for strategic control. The use of writing can have profound effects on individuals and social groups (Goody 1986; Postgate 1995; Lamberg-Karlovsky 2003); written documents or inscriptions frequently function as political propaganda, creating opportunities for the wide dissemination of information, whether supporting or opposing the established political ideology.

In order to consider ideology, meaning and *mentalité* in the material record, it is important to reflect on the ways that material things may represent the paraphernalia of power. Since the most limiting factor archaeologists face in attempting to understand ideology is establishing some sort of congruence between mental concepts and social actions, on the one hand, and their material expression, on the other, one way forward is to develop explicit procedures that may help to articulate material conditions with meanings and mentalities. The relationship between symbolic expression and meaning may be imprecise, and symbolism can be

deliberately ambiguous (Robb 1998). Rituals may signal different things in different places and at different times, and to different people; symbols are sometimes inverted or subverted intentionally (Sherratt 1991). Moreover, can we assume that all members of a given society followed the dominant ideology? How autonomous are ideologies, and to what extent are they integrated functionally with economic (e.g. subsistence or production) or other factors? Accepting the Neo-Marxist position that ideology forms a critical part of the politico-economic infrastructure, one must still ask if causal factors are essentially economic, ideological, some combination of the two, or otherwise.

In recent years, a radically different approach developed by Bell (1992; 1997) takes its lead from the notion of 'ritualisation'. Rather than seeing ritual as intrinsically separate from 'regular' activities, whether or not masked by ideology, Bell sees ritualisation as those social strategies by which certain, otherwise perfectly normal activities or performances are set apart from everyday practice. Taking up the tenet that ritualisation is the only thing that separates rituals from everyday activities, archaeologists have begun to follow up the proposition that this concept offers a means to explore why certain activities are singled out for exaggerated or otherwise 'special' performances. This may also make it possible to (re)contextualise ritual in its social context and to understand the role of rituals in relation to the contemporary practices of everyday life (Verhoeven 2002; Bradley 2003; 2005; Chaniotis 2011).

Each chapter in this section approaches ritual and ideology in different ways. Remarking on the scarcity of visual imagery (aniconic) in the southern Levantine Early Bronze Age in contrast to that of the preceding Chalcolithic (iconic), Yekutieli proposes and delineates a major, deliberate ideological reformation in society. Webb examines how ritual authority first emerged on Early Bronze Age Cyprus in the context of increasing politico-economic interaction with the wider Mediterranean world, and later became institutionalised through more socially integrative practices

and in response to economic intensification and 'urbanisation'. Prent examines how changes in early Iron Age ritual practices on Crete – involving the reinvention of local traditions and the adoption of foreign features – helped to crystallise and define new social identities on the island. Finally, Guidi assesses the connections between ritual and social organisation in central and northern Italy, investigating in particular the institutionalisation of cult activities.

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35 The Early Bronze Age Southern Levant: The Ideology of an Aniconic Reformation

Yuval Yekutieli

Abstract

This chapter contrasts the remarkable scarcity of visual imagery during the Early Bronze Age of the southern Levant with the wealth of such imagery in the preceding period. It is proposed that this dramatic change was the result of deliberate social action, which testifies to a large-scale ideological reformation – from iconism to aniconism. It is further suggested that this reformation had long-term repercussions in the region.

Introduction

After more than 120 years of exposing southern Levantine Early Bronze Age (EBA) cultures through scientific archaeological excavations, it is now undeniably clear that artistic representations are very scarce throughout its 1700-year duration (3700–2000 BC). This situation is drastically different from the state of affairs in the region before and after the EBA, as well as during that period in adjacent areas. The goal of this study is to propose an explanation for this phenomenon, to inquire when and how it began and to consider any later repercussions.

Before attempting an explanation, it is worth noting that

visual imagery encountered in archaeological excavations is generally labeled as ‘art,’ whether by archaeologists or art historians. This stems from the modern allocation of visual imageries to the realm of the aesthetic. Nevertheless, it is obvious that these representations convey different messages within the realms of religion, ideology, power relations, and more (Ross 2005: 327). For the sake of keeping up with the disciplinary jargon, however, I follow the conventional discourse and use the term ‘art’ for dealing with the main focus of this chapter – the visual imagery of the late fifth to third millennia BC.

Art during the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Ages

The southern Levantine Chalcolithic period (ca. 4500–3700 BC) provides an extreme wealth of visual imagery (Figure 35.1). These artistic manifestations include a very rich and creative ceramic repertoire (e.g., Commenge-Pellerin 1987; 1990; Garfinkel 1999; Commenge *et al.* 2006a; 2006b); sculpture in clay (e.g., Commenge *et al.* 2006a) and stone (e.g., Epstein 1988); ivory carving and manufacture of figurines (e.g., Perrot 1959); production of highly delicate perforated flint disks (e.g., Noy 1998); fine ground-stone objects, including elaborate pedestaled fenestrated bowls (e.g., Rowan and Golden 2009: 39–41); violin-shaped figurines carved of different types of stones (Alon and Levy 1989); sophisticated copper maceheads, scepters, standards, vessels, and crowns (e.g., Bar-Adon 1971; Tadmor 1989; Tadmor *et al.* 1995); complex wall drawings (e.g., Mallon *et al.* 1934; Cameron 1981); and elaborately shaped and painted ceramic ossuaries (e.g., Perrot and Ladiray 1980; Gal *et al.* 1996; 1997; 1999). As stated above, although often described as ‘ancient art,’ these objects should be better understood as ‘symbolically charged artefacts ... [that] ... suggest an overarching, region-wide cosmology or religious framework’ (Rowan and Ilan 2007: 249).

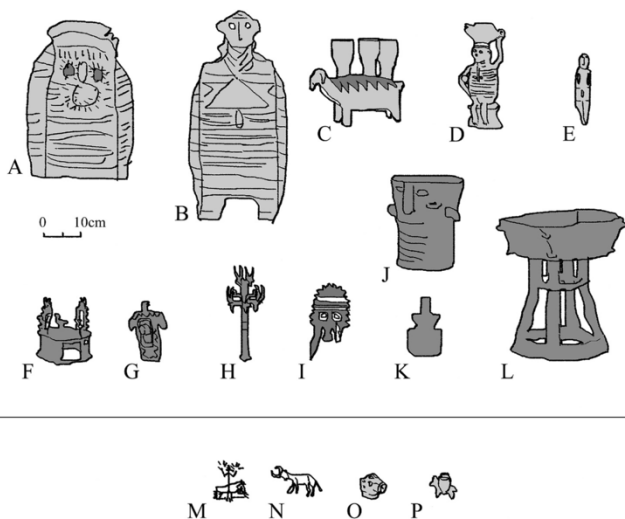


Figure 35.1. Selected 'art' objects from the Southern Levant during the Chalcolithic (A–L) and Early Bronze Age (M–P): Chalcolithic – A. Ossuary, Peqi'in (after Gal *et al.* 1999; fig. 5); B. Ossuary, Peqi'in (after Gal *et al.* 1999; fig. 1); C. Clay statue, Gilat (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); D. Clay statue, Gilat (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); E. Ivory figurine, Beer-Sheva (after [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Early History – Archaeology/Beer Sheva – Prehistoric Dwelling Sites](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Early%20History%20-%20Archaeology/Beer%20Sheva%20-%20Prehistoric%20Dwelling%20Sites/)); F. Copper crown, Nahal Mishmar (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); G. Copper scepter, Nahal Mishmar (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); H. Copper scepter, Nahal Mishmar (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); I. Detail of a wall drawing, Ghassul, Jordan (after Mallon *et al.* 1934); J. House-idol, Golan (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); K. Violin-shaped figurine, Gilat (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); L. Basalt chalice (after <http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/>); Early Bronze Age – M. Grafitto from Arad (after Beck 1995, fig. 8); N. Grafitto from Megiddo (after Loud 1948, fig. 16); O. Ivory bull head, Bet-Yerah (after Beck, 1995, fig. 14); P. Clay donkey figurine, Azor (after [http://www.antiquities.org.il/t/Item_en.aspx?indicator = 23&CurrentPageKey = 4](http://www.antiquities.org.il/t/Item_en.aspx?indicator=23&CurrentPageKey=4)).

The situation in the EBA is drastically different. The repertoire of three-dimensional figurative art from the entire EBA includes a few small ivory bulls' heads (Milevski 2011: 159–60); 20–30 miniature donkey figurines (Milevski 2011: 183–88); a few clay bed-models (Beck 1995: 27–29); and a handful of crudely shaped human figurines from the Bab ed-Dhra cemetery (Schaub and Rast 1989: 274–89).

Two-dimensional art is comprised of graffiti that are probably Egyptian in origin in Megiddo (Loud 1948: 61, pls 271–82); scratching on a cave wall at Gezer (Macalister 1912, pls XLVI–XLVIII); a very schematic graffito on a stone from Arad (Beck 1995: 13); a decorated silver cup probably imported from Syro-Mesopotamia (Yeivin 1971); and some incised bone-tubes (Beck 1995: 27–29). To these should be added a collection of between 100 and 200 seal impressions on pottery, and approximately 10–20 seals (Beck 1995: 14–21; Lapp 1995). This whole corpus, if assembled, might be presented in a single medium-sized museum showroom.

When compared with the same region in the Chalcolithic, whose duration was less than half that of the EBA, and for which such a showroom might not be enough even for presenting art objects of single sites such as Nahal Mishmar (Bar-Adon 1971), Peqi'in cave (Gal *et al.* 1996; 1997; 1999), or Gilat (Levy 2006), the contrast is striking, and has been noted before. While investigating EBA urbanization, Kempinski (1978: 32) noted: 'Our [i.e., southern Levantine EBA] society probably included an intellectual stratum, sufficient to enable construction of the various monumental buildings which have so far been brought to light. Only very few objects of art have been discovered.' Twelve years later, Mazar (1990: 136) commented: 'The number and quality of art objects from Early Bronze Palestine is surprisingly low compared to their number and quality in the Chalcolithic period. The few known items, however, have a special value, as most of them represent ties with various cultural centers.'

Pirhiya Beck (1995: 32; original in Hebrew, my translation) sharpened these observations a few years later, focusing on the question of artistic continuity between the

two periods:

...it seems that the claim about a continuation in religious symbolism from the Chalcolithic to the EBA should be re-examined ... the real significant matter is the difference within the major themes ... The 'material-poverty' of the EBA is thought provoking due to the role of art in a period when the city and the state crystallized in the cultural centers of Mesopotamia and Egypt, and due to its later role at Ebla in Syria. These cultures stood out in their rich and elaborate symbolic-visual assemblage which was intended for consolidating the population around the new organizational institutions created at that time. The Ghassulian culture [i.e., Chalcolithic] in various regions throughout the country excelled as well in a diverse symbolic assemblage that included burial-symbolism, but these had vanished while the Chalcolithic sites were deserted. How, then, can we see a cultural continuity between these two periods?

As these researchers have stated and restated, the rarity of artistic representations in the EBA is indeed astonishing – both in relation to the preceding period and in light of the emerging urbanization. On the latter aspect, it should be noted that ever since Childe's (1950) *The Urban Revolution*, one of the affinities attributed to urbanization is increased artistic expression (Childe 1950: 15; Collon 1995: 13–14). However, as just described, although becoming urban (Kempinski 1978; Greenberg 2002), EBA southern Levantine society did not produce figures, icons, statues, or drawings in quantities known in the region prior to or after this period, or as was common in the neighboring areas – Egypt and Syro-Mesopotamia (Robins 2008; Collon 1995). Thus,

unlike most research in the realm of ancient art that describes what is present in certain times and contexts, this study focuses on the absent and the silenced.

The Transformation

The contrast between the Chalcolithic and the EBA is also striking because of its abrupt occurrence. The great representational wealth of the Chalcolithic continued up to the period's very end, e.g., in the 'Cave of the Treasure' or the Golan sites (Carmi *et al.* 1995), while the EBA 'artistic void' began at its immediate onset, in the early EB 1a (Yekutieli 2001). It must be added here that on the basis of radiocarbon dating, the 'Cave of the Treasure' was first understood as being very late within the Chalcolithic sequence (Gilead 1994: 10–11). A newer analysis suggested that the treasure and its wrapping are actually much older (Aardsma 2001; Gilead 2011). Following further discussion, however, it seems that the actual date of the hoard's deposition is in fact problematic, as different parts of the same object provided contradictory radiocarbon readings (Davidovich 2008: 131–34). Nevertheless, since the later (post-1990) radiocarbon dates might be assumed to be more reliable than the older dates, then the latest result that gave a 2σ calibrated date of 3950–3650 Cal BC (RT-1407; Carmi and Segal 1992: 131) might serve as a *terminus post quem*. This hints that the actual deposition of the hoard, although still within the Chalcolithic 'sphere,' did not occur before the beginning of the fourth millennium BC, thus placing it in direct proximity to the Chalcolithic–EBA transition.

The change between these two periods is not only associated with the disappearance of visual arts, but is manifest as well in the abandonment of settlements and the formation of a smaller number of new ones, either in the same places or at other locations (Rowan and Golden 2009: 69–70). Concurrent with the changes, however, there is also a significant continuity between the periods, such as in various concepts and types of material culture (Braun 1989; Yekutieli 2000; 2001; Golani and Segal 2002). Thus, the idea that a totally different *ethnos* had arrived and destroyed

the former one – the common explanatory model of half a century ago (e.g., Kenyon 1960: 84–85) – is untenable. Accordingly, during recent decades the transition between the periods has often been described as the ‘collapse’ of the Chalcolithic system and the emergence of a new order within a more or less similar indigenous context (detailed references in Levy 1995: 241–43; Rowan and Golden 2009: 69–71).

Various suggestions have been suggested to explain this ‘collapse,’ such as epidemics (Elliott 1978), climate change (Joffe 1993; Levy 1995: 241), warfare (Levy 1995: 243), weakening of the existing sociopolitical organization (Joffe 1993: 36–37; Levy 1995: 241; Bourke 2001:152), and commercialization (Joffe 1993: 37; Levy 1995: 242). No decisive evidence for any of these has ever been demonstrated.

Addressing specifically the decrease in the realm of visual imagery, Joffe (1993: 36–37) suggested that it occurred as a result of the thinning of the Chalcolithic sociopolitical and economic structures to such a degree that its elite positions were undermined together with their associated attributes. Together with Dessel and Hallote (Joffe *et al.* 2001: 16–17), he had also suggested that: ‘Southern Levantine Chalcolithic élites were simply too small, poorly organized, and hierarchically varied to evolve past the village level,’ and that: ‘Possessing some basic symbols, Chalcolithic élites could not apply them in ways that generated sufficient social inequality to either ensure their own continued existence or to make the jump to urbanism. These ancient symbols became impediments to breaking out of religio-social sources of power, rather than tools for reformulating socio-economic power.’ Building upon these ideas, Philip (2003: 123) further proposed that: ‘...the symbolic items characteristic of the Chalcolithic may have disappeared simply because they have become irrelevant as power was no longer invested in control of special purpose artefacts but in the ability to mobilize land and people to produce desirable staple products.’

Acknowledging the theoretical contribution of these

interpretations, the next part of this study changes course to focus on an unexplored aspect of the differences between the Chalcolithic and the EBA: the decline in artisanal production of aesthetic representations. This in turn leads to a different interpretation of the cultural transformation and its repercussions.

Experiencing the Change

Reflecting upon the differences between the Chalcolithic and the EBA, straightforward observation might note the near absence of visual imagery from the latter in contrast to its intensity in the former. A more explanatory approach would go beyond observation and suggest that since these visual images represent ideas, beliefs, power, and ideology, their disappearance indicates a change in those realms. Such a change, however, might be conceptualized differently from a phenomenological perspective. As the psychologist Fred Wertz (2005: 175) remarked: 'Phenomenology is a low-hovering, in-dwelling, meditative philosophy that glories in the concreteness of person-world relations and accords lived experience, with all its indeterminacy and ambiguity, primacy over the known.'

In our case, a phenomenological approach seeks to discern how we can imagine the difference between *being* in the Chalcolithic and in the EBA worlds. It questions what this difference would account for in everyday life; what would be dissimilar in everyday sounds, smells, and atmosphere; what would be different in conversations at home and in the marketplace, and which new discourse would echo at various community encounters. Approaching the situation from such a viewpoint highlights matters other than those commonly discussed. In the framework of this study, I use but a single topic to portray this point – the artisanal aspect of iconographic production.

The unique artistic richness of the Chalcolithic period was produced in artisanal workshops. Since Chalcolithic society was not so large, and since the production of its numerous 'art' objects consumed a great deal of energy, it may be

assumed that a significant proportion of the community dealt with crafts at one level or another. This deep involvement in crafts means that besides the extensive time and energy invested in work, significant mental resources were also devoted to teaching and training new generations of artisans (thus maintaining cultural transmission), passing the secrets of their art to selected youth, discussing matters of quality, skill, pride, and the social values and identities associated with craftsmanship – such as the honor of the master, the respect due to him from his apprentices, and the ways of dealing with the rich world of materials, objects, tools, and techniques (Herzfeld 2004; Stark *et al.* 2008).

This extensive artisanal world witnessed an abrupt transformation at the onset of the EBA. The reality of the new ‘artless’ world meant that immense practical knowledge was lost; chains of transmission terminated; know-how, methods, and ideas became useless; and a whole set of feelings, senses, smells, and sounds was lost.

Simultaneously, because a large part of craft production was discarded, at the community level, much time and energy became available. Judging from the visible archaeological finds, EBA artisans continued manufacturing utilitarian tools and vessels. Objects beyond the worldly and the practical, however, had vanished. We may speculate that their disappearance released physical energies and changed the understanding of spiritual materiality. Since people are inherently intelligent, the mental and physical skills freed from producing and revering the various icons were directed elsewhere. Work was aimed at those directly life-sustaining goals such as agriculture, trade, storage, and architecture, while spirituality stressed the abstraction of the supernatural.

Experiencing the difference between the periods in such a phenomenological light gives it additional substance: the transformation of society’s *mentalité* is more clearly distinguished and felt. Another observation must be added. This ideological change was not only abrupt but long lasting as well. The Chalcolithic visual expressions vanished within the space of one century, and they remained absent for at

least the next 1700 years. Since the EBA population could not have been ignorant of the idea of visual expressions – the earliest EBA communities knew of it from close connections with their Chalcolithic heritage, and the later EBA people knew of it from their neighbors – the inevitable conclusion is that EBA society deliberately refrained from iconographic representations. Society's mind-set had been deliberately reformed.

The transformation between these two mind-sets was set in motion somewhere for reasons unknown. I would suggest that its realization occurred through deliberate social action that transferred spirituality from the visual-sensual to the abstract. The transformation was not only ideological, but also left a clear mark on everyday life, practices, and discourses. A multitude of previously indispensable crafts became unnecessary. As they vanished, the mental world bound up with them disappeared as well.

Iconoclasm

Ramon Sarró (2009: 1), an anthropologist working in rural Upper Guinea, wrote about an event that prompted his research:

In 1993 I was walking with my friend Lamin around his native village in Guinea when he pointed towards a cassava field and said: 'And this is where our sacred wood used to be.' 'Used to be?' I asked. 'Yes,' he replied, 'it was here that we used to do the initiations into manhood, but Asekou, a Susu man, cleared it in 1957; he put an end to our custom.' It was this comment that triggered my interest in the iconoclastic movement.

Lamin was a Baga man, a member of that Guinean group of coastal rice farmers who carved a series of famous objects that we in the West consider beautiful 'African art' ...

However, what to Western eyes were beautiful works of art were part and parcel of a 'landscape of fear' ... in the perception of many young Baga men and women. These masks, sculptures and headdresses were in fact steeped in contradiction and an ambivalence common to iconic representations in Africa in general ...: they could protect and heal, but they could also punish and kill ... In my research on the iconoclastic movement, I made a conscious effort to listen to the voices of the iconoclasts ..., as well as to the voices of those who suffered their violent attacks and who hid objects away from them.

These observations, almost as remote as possible in time and space from the fourth millennium BC Near East, and obviously connected with totally different sociopolitical contexts, are nevertheless revealing. They suggest a key for deciphering the disappearance of 'these beautiful Chalcolithic works of art' in the transition to the EBA and connecting this reality with specific archaeological finds. Two examples may serve to illustrate this point: the first is from the Judean Desert, and the second from the Golan.

Since the early 1970s, researchers have wondered if there was any contingent link between some Chalcolithic occurrences discovered in the Judean Desert – a deserted temple at En-Gedi, a hidden hoard of predominantly copper cult objects at the nearby 'Cave of the Treasure,' and the burial of 21 violently killed individuals in that cave and two adjacent ones (e.g., Bar-Adon 1971; Ussishkin 1971; Haas and Nathan 1973; Moorey 1988; Davidovich 2008). It was initially proposed that the hoard found in the Cave of the Treasure had been rescued from the En-Gedi temple by its priests who escaped either an attack by approaching enemies (Ussishkin 1971: 39; 1980: 40–41), or an epidemic (Elliott 1978: 50). Later, Goren (1995: 297) proposed that the Cave of the Treasure hoard had not originated in En-

Gedi but in a different inter-regional Chalcolithic center; after further analyses, however, he again proposed a Judean Desert origin (Goren 2008). Concurrently, following a comprehensive regional analysis, Davidovich (2008: 150–60) reached the conclusion that both the Cave of the Treasure and its two adjacent caves in Nahal Mishmar were used as hideouts for refugees during the Chalcolithic period. But refugees from what?

Examining these rich data in light of Sarró's insights and the observation regarding the abrupt cessation of 'artisitic' activity by the turn of the EBA allows some fine-tuning of this Judean Desert scenario. It would appear that this case, involving three caves and an abandoned cult-site in the same region, might well reflect an anti-iconic or even iconoclastic event that occurred toward the end of the Chalcolithic period. Earlier suggestions that the temple was emptied of its icons, either by arriving adversaries or by those fearing their arrival, seem entirely reasonable. Not only that, it appears that as part of an evolving 'landscape of fear,' the hoard hidden in the Cave of the Treasure was brought there by people who escaped similar persecution.

The best testimony for such harassment is found in the forensic report describing the burial of 21 individuals in the Cave of the Treasure and its adjacent caves (labeled Nahal Mishmar caves I, II, and III; Bar-Adon 1971). As Haas and Nathan (1973: 143; my translation from Hebrew) describe: 'the examination of the physical injuries observed on these skeletons demonstrates that they suffered cruel blows before they arrived in the caves ... the right hand of one individual was chopped off and the textile covering him was stained with blood ... the cult objects' hoard included remains of blood-stained wrappings.' In addition, individual C4, a male of 22–25 years old, suffered a hard blow that cracked his skull (Haas and Nathan 1973: 153, fig. 14).

Injured and killed during the violent events connected with the hiding of the hoard, these refugees were buried in the caves by the same people who saved and hid the icons. Such a scenario is reminiscent of another observation related by Sarró (2009: 116) in Guinea: 'At the time, it was strongly

believed that elders kept their objects (masks, headdresses, sculptures) in the secluded woods. Maybe we should recall here a common Guinean saying ...: “Children know how to run, but only elders know how to hide.” Thus, we may speculate that it is only due to the ingenuity of a few daring fugitives that the Chalcolithic iconographic hoard and some of its worshippers’ remains survived.

The Judean Desert case is not the only case of violent activity directly associated with the hiding or destruction of iconography at the end of the Chalcolithic period. Freikman (2011) recently noted that within Chalcolithic sites in the Golan, which according to some researchers represents one of the latest Chalcolithic cultures in the southern Levant (Carmi *et al.* 1995), the so-called ‘household-idols’ were intentionally damaged simultaneously with the destruction of their corresponding houses. The household-idols are large (ca. 50 cm high), cylinder-shaped figures with a shallow depression on top, made of basalt. Usually they display human faces with emphasized nose, eyes, ears, mouth, and sometimes a beard on the circumference of the block. After surveying the known corpus of basalt household idols found in the Golan and its near vicinity ($n=51$), Freikman (2011) reached the conclusion that about one-third of them were intentionally broken. By experimenting and studying breakage patterns, he deduced that the idols were violently smashed, with the most damage directed to their upper part – a cup-shaped depression used for libations – which is presumed to be the most important ritually. Though Freikman interpreted this iconoclastic activity as a part of a Chalcolithic ritual concerning house abandonment, I suggest that it was actually connected with the events representing the transition to the EBA.

The cases described above, coupled with the observations regarding the abrupt end of the Chalcolithic *mentalité* and the disappearance of visual expressions, suggest that this period ended with multiple iconoclastic events, followed by a major symbolic reformation. Although from a 6000-year distance the process seems to have been rather rapid, it is reasonable to assume that the transformation took some

time. It is likely that the iconoclastic activity began in a certain place and time, and then spread at a specific rate until it encompassed all of the southern Levant. Consequently, it makes sense that while in some regions the reformation was already over, it was only reaching other areas. Hence, as already suggested many years ago (e.g., de Contenson 1961; Hennessy 1967: 9, 17, 18; Perrot 1968), and proposed again recently (Golani and Segal 2002: 150), it seems logical that, within the southern Levant, there was some temporal overlap between Chalcolithic and EBA cultures, until the total ascendancy of an EBA way of life.

Regarding the people themselves, it is likely that as the reformation expanded, the majority was converted, some were killed, and a few escaped from the region, as evidenced, for example, by the arrival of a southern Levantine population in Buto layer I in the Nile Delta, some time between the middle to latest Chalcolithic (Faltings 2002; Braun and van den Brink 2008: 644–45).

Concerning the concept of iconoclasm, which looms large at the Chalcolithic–EBA transition, it should be noted that history is saturated with such cases. One immediately thinks of much later episodes – the Byzantine (Brubaker and Haldon 2011) and Muslim iconoclasms (King 1985), or the Protestant Reformation (Philips 1973; Aston 1989; Michalski 1993; Wandel 1995). Iconoclasm, however, has very early roots (as discussed recently in the ‘Iconoclasm and Text Destruction in the Ancient Near East and Beyond’ conference, Chicago, April 2011; see now May 2012) as described here, these may be as old as the beginning of the fourth millennium BC. Noteworthy in this context, due to their extreme effects, iconoclastic events are often labeled historically as ‘revolutions,’ ‘reformations,’ or ‘reforms.’ Accordingly, and since the Chalcolithic to EBA transition witnessed a radical transformation that had repercussions of a long-ranging magnitude, I propose labeling this event ‘The EBA Aniconic Reformation.’

Aniconism: The EBA and Beyond

In writing about the exhibition 'Iconoclasm,' Latour (2002) described several types of iconoclasts. Attempting to envisage the EBA iconoclasts' outlook, his 'Type A People' come to mind (Latour 2002: 21):

...those who want to free the believers – those they *deem* to be believers – of their false attachments to idols of all sorts and shapes. Idols, the fragments of which are now lying on the ground, were nothing but obstacles in the path to higher virtues. They had to be destroyed ... Living with them was unbearable ... Type A is thus the pure form of 'classical' iconoclasm ... Purification is their goal. The world, for A people, would be a much better place, much cleaner, much more enlightened, if only one could get rid of all mediations and if one could jump directly into contact with the original, the ideas, the true God.

The violent iconoclastic events that took place during the transition from the Chalcolithic to the EBA paved the way for a new aniconic discourse adopted by the people of southern Levantine society for centuries. A primary testimony for the persistence of the aniconic ideology is the absence of visual imagery throughout the EBA. In addition to this passive evidence, however, there is also an active indication for the endurance of the idea.

In the later part of EB 1b, Egypt had entered the southern Levant and established a colony in southwest Canaan (e.g., Brandl 1992; Yekutieli 2007). The Egyptians brought with them their material and cultural baggage that included, among other things, visual imagery such as *serekhs* (a rectangular enclosure representing the niched or gated façade of a palace) and other symbols incised on pottery (van den Brink and Braun 2002; Yekutieli 2002; Braun and van den Brink 2008), graffiti engraved on stones (Loud 1948: 61, pls 271–82), seal impressions (Schulman 1976;

1980; 1992), and some decorated slate palettes and figurines (Brandl 1992; Gophna 1993; Miroschedji *et al.* 2001). Most of these objects were discovered within the heartland of the Egyptian colony (Yekutieli 2008: fig. 2), except for the so-called Picture Pavement found in Megiddo, away from the colony, which thus represents a striking phenomenon. In my opinion, this latter case demonstrates the persistence of the aniconic ideology in the local Canaanite EBA sphere.

The Picture Pavement is a group of Egyptian style drawings incised on stone slabs that were placed within the makeup of a pavement leading into a local Canaanite temple in Megiddo (Yekutieli 2008). A few years ago, I studied these graffiti and suggested that they were Egyptian representations damaged and degraded by the local population as a symbolic resistance to the Egyptian colonizer (Yekutieli 2005; 2008). In light of the current understanding of the southern Levantine EBA culture as ideologically aniconic, however, I would propose adjusting my previous interpretation to suggest that the symbolic mutilation was not solely an act within the realm of the colonial encounter, but also in the ideological realm. The locals who were aniconic not only resisted the Egyptians as colonizers but also denounced their icons, which by their mere existence challenged aniconism. Hence, Egyptian visual representations incised on stones were collected to be defaced, scraped, and pounded, and finally to be placed as a road surface leading to the temple of the local abstract god. This was a symbolic declaration regarding the supremacy of one ideology over the other.

The opposition to the Egyptians and their iconography, I presume, continued through their retreat from southwest Canaan at the end of EB 1 (Yekutieli 2007). Interestingly, after they left, no memory of the Egyptian presence lingered into EB 2: they were silenced and erased from local memory (Yekutieli 2007: 74). Egyptian culture, which affected so many other cultures that tried to imitate its art (Higginbotham 2000; Faegersten 2003; Ashton 2004), was totally rejected in EBA southern Levantine culture. It seems

that Egyptian iconography was forcefully scraped off the surface of aniconic Canaan, which preserved its non-representational philosophy throughout the EBA.

Aniconism, so it seems, continued somewhat into the following period, the Middle Bronze Age (MBA), as well. The beginning of MB 2a (2000–1800 BC; also labeled by others ‘MB 1’; Dever 1987: 149–50) is still relatively devoid of iconography, which arrived, or rather returned, later in the MBA. As Latour (2002: 17) noted, despite the fact that images attract so much hatred, and therefore are destroyed at certain times, they always return, no matter how strongly one wants to get rid of them. This ‘return’ occurred in the middle of the MBA, very much in connection with foreign input such as Egyptian scarabs (Ilan 1995: 310), Syrian figurines, Mesopotamian cylinder seals (Marcus 2003: 97), and Aegean-style frescoes (Niemeier and Niemeier 1998; Cline *et al.* 2011).

The return to iconism during the MBA has been noted in the archaeological literature, although not as such, but rather as a general observation about the differences between the EBA and the MBA. Philip (2003: 113–14), for example, compared temple offerings in these two periods and noted: ‘The large quantities of faunal remains recovered from the [EBA] Megiddo cult area (Wapnish and Hesse 2000; Hesse and Wapnish 2001) indicate that domestic livestock, sheep/goat in particular, were the preferred offering. When this is viewed in the light of the absence from the EBA cult installations at Megiddo and Khirbet ez-Zeraqon of the large quantities of portable artefacts so characteristic of MBA cult sites in the region (Philip 1988; Ilan 1992), it is clear that the two periods differed in the nature of the materials deemed appropriate as offerings for divinities.’

Conclusion

As a final and very cautious remark, it might be added that although iconism returned in the MBA, the aniconic belief did not necessarily disappear. Addressing a completely

different matter, Finkelstein (1995) once suggested that, during the MBA, a part of the local society adopted a pastoral-nomad way of life. This part, in his view, returned to a sedentary mode at the very end of the LBA and became the core of what crystalized as the Israelite entity. Whether or not one regards these ideas as valid, it is remarkable that, at a certain stage, the early Israelites once again preached for aniconism in the same region that this ideology was first professed.

In this view, aniconism vanished and returned alternately as a counterbalance to iconic imagery. The cyclical disappearance and return of images, which Latour noticed, applies as well to its opposite phenomenon – aniconism. Accordingly the aniconic EBA Reformation might be seen not as an isolated event but as a first stage in the abstraction of faiths attested to in later Near Eastern religions. One of the tracks leading from the ideological reformation of the early fourth millennium BC had effectively shown the way to the formation of a long-lasting regional aniconic faith, which stringently declared millennia later: ‘You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth’ (Exodus 20:4).

Acknowledgments

I thank the editors for inviting me to take part in this volume, and Steve Rosen and Bernard Knapp for their most useful remarks on the manuscript.

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36 Ritual as the Setting for Contentious Interaction: From Social Negotiation to Institutionalised Authority in Bronze Age Cyprus

Jennifer M. Webb

Abstract

This chapter traces the emergence of ritual authority in Bronze Age Cyprus against a background of increasing sectional interests and growing economic and political interaction with the wider Mediterranean world. The institutionalisation of ritual and the development of related ideologies and iconographies may be seen to have emerged in part from earlier, more socially integrative practices and in part as a response to ‘urbanisation’ and economic intensification during the Late Bronze Age.

Introduction

Recent years have seen a burgeoning literature on the archaeology of ritual, with a strong focus on context and performative practices (e.g. Insoll 2004; Bradley 2005; Barrowclough and Malone 2007; Kyriakidis 2007). Definitional issues have been at the forefront, with ritual now widely understood as a set of formalised behaviours through which religious constructs are generated and reproduced or, even more broadly, as ‘the physical expression of symbolic relationships and spiritual beliefs

through formal behavioural routines' (Muir and Driver 2004: 128).

Recognising ritual contexts is often problematic, and much research in this area has been inadequate or extreme, with scholars either rejecting the possibility of accessing ritual and religious belief or overplaying the interpretation of isolated elements (Malone *et al.* 2007: 3). Recent work on 'ritualisation' is particularly important in this context (Bradley 2003; 2005). If basic activities such as making tools and building houses can be ritualised, then rituals and symbols permeate everyday life. Ritualised activities, themselves meaningful repeated actions, may be routinely performed in both domestic and funerary settings and need not involve special places, people and objects. This allows for a more flexible conception of ritual as a historical phenomenon and raises the possibility of tracing the emergence of institutionalised ritual authority in the archaeological record.

This chapter offers an opportunity to review the available data from Bronze Age Cyprus. For much of the period, we have little evidence for discrete cult places. Relatively few settlements of the Early and Middle Bronze Age (hereafter the Early and Middle Cypriot or EC and MC periods, ca. 2400–1650 BC), however, have been investigated. Attention has instead focused on the funerary domain as an arena of social and ideological negotiation. In the Late Bronze Age (LBA, or Late Cypriot [LC] period, ca. 1650–1050 BC), the focus shifts dramatically. During the course of the LC period, earlier village communities became integrated into urban societies. This was accompanied by the construction of special buildings that focused attention on controlling elites and the development of a socially coercive ritual iconography, largely adapted from external sources, which served to legitimise increasingly institutionalised inequality.

The following discussion considers the contexts in which rituals were created and performed in Bronze Age Cyprus, and attempts to identify those aspects of life that were given added emphasis through an investment in ritual action. It traces the emergence of ritual authority against a

background of shifting regional trajectories, increasing sectional interests and growing economic and political interaction with the wider Mediterranean world. The institutionalisation of ritual performance and the development of related ideologies and iconographies may be seen as emerging in part from earlier, more fluid and socially integrative practices and in part as a response to the processes of 'urbanisation', economic intensification and possibly secondary state formation that took place on the island in the early years of the LBA.

The Early and Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2400–1650 BC)

EC and MC ritual is likely to have been adaptive, dynamic and flexible. At present, the most visible practices are those associated with death and burial. In the EC period, north coast funerary ceremonial provides a particularly complex picture. Here, tomb elaboration, feasting and other forms of patterned behaviour are readily apparent. In small-scale societies, burial is likely to have been among the most evident forms of symbolic behaviour, offering a useful starting point for exploring ritualised performance and tracing the transmission of ritual iconography over time.

Death and Burial: A Ritualised Setting for Social Negotiation

EC and MC burial grounds at Vounous, Lapithos and Karmi on the central north coast provide an extensive body of data from a bounded geographic region ([Figure 36.1](#)). The associated settlements are likely to have belonged to an ancient social territory, with the dominant centre located for most of this period at Vounous. Rock-cut tombs were used for multiple burials, often over several hundred years, serving as tangible connections with ancestral spaces, events and beliefs.

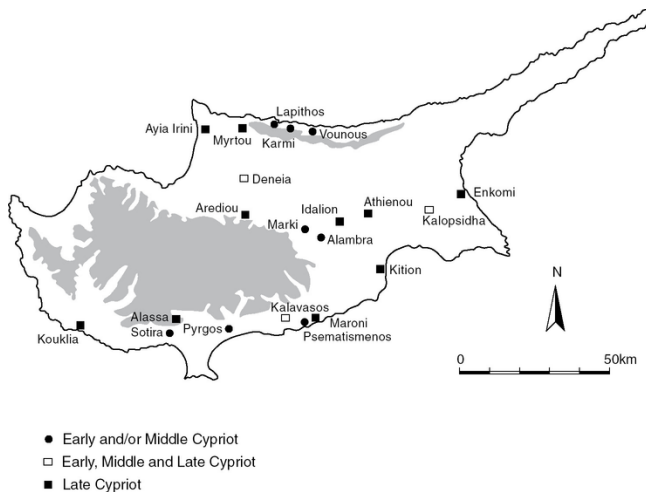


Figure 36.1. Map of Cyprus showing sites mentioned in the text (prepared by Jennifer M. Webb).

Prominent among EC tombs that show architectural elaboration is *Karmi Palealona Tomb 6* (Figure 36.2) (Webb *et al.* 2009: 129–35). A shallow buttress on the rear wall of the chamber is carved with a pilaster topped by a pair of horns. On the right wall of the entrance shaft, which is unusually large and deep, an anthropomorphic, probably female figure is carved in relief, flanked by rectangular panels. On the façade that gives access to the chamber, three carved pilasters are topped with V-shaped incisions, possibly intended as schematic representations of horned animal heads. These exceptional features suggest that Palealona Tomb 6 was a mortuary shrine – making it the earliest Bronze Age ritual facility to be identified on the island (Webb *et al.* 2009: 242–45). As one of the oldest tombs in the cemetery, it perhaps belonged to the founders of the settlement. The role of burial in legitimatising rights to land and resources is likely to have resulted in particular status being accorded to founder tombs, which may also have been linked with origin narratives and foundation rituals.

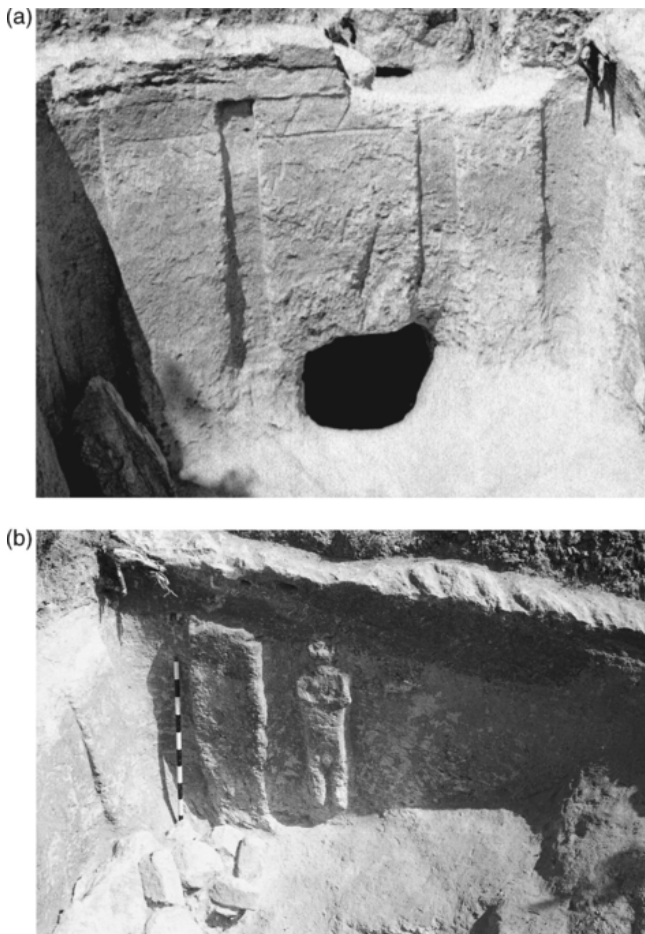


Figure 36.2. Karmi *Palealona* Tomb 6: (a) stomion façade; (b) dromos wall, after Webb *et al.* (2009: figs 4.36, 3.40).

Palealona Tomb 6 may be compared with two terracotta models (Figure 36.3), probably from Marki, which show a female figure standing before three vertical panels topped by horned animal heads (Karageorghis 1991: 142–44). A further association between the models and burial is suggested by the presence of a jar before the horned uprights. Jars were found before the chamber entrance in three tombs at Vounous and in recesses in a number of chambers at Lapithos, suggesting that they played a significant role in mortuary ceremonies (Webb *et al.* 2009:

243–44). Horned panels appear also on a fragmentary model from Kalopsidha (Åström 1966: 14–15, fig. 5) and on an amphora from Psematismenos (Flourentzos 1993), suggesting that key aspects of ritual practice developed in the north had spread across much of the island by the early second millennium BC.



Figure 36.3. Shrine model, probably from Marki. Cyprus Museum inventory no. 1970/V-28/1. Courtesy of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Evidence for feasting is particularly strong at Vounous. Here, EC tombs contain large numbers of decorated bowls, jugs and flasks (Webb and Frankel 2008: 290–91). There is

an emphasis on distinctive drinking vessels, which frequently involve the accumulation and redundancy of elements of form and decoration. Incised motifs are symbolically complex and occur in intricate configurations that focus attention on particular consumers. Tomb chambers also contain food presentation bowls and abundant remains of cattle, sheep and goats (Stubbings 1950: 374–80). The presence of articulated joints that were not fully de-fleshed or broken for the removal of marrow suggests processing practices likely to reflect the special nature of funerary consumption (Horwitz 2001).

The north coast cemeteries also provide a remarkable insight into an emerging ritual iconography. This is especially so for the earliest tombs at Vounous, which produced elaborate vessels possibly made for use in mortuary ceremonies. Their iconography is almost entirely concerned with horned quadrupeds, which appear as whole animals or animal heads on the rims of large pedestal bowls and deep bowls in conjunction with complex incised decoration (Figure 36.4a) (Karageorghis 1991: pls CXIII–CXVIII). Cattle appear most often, along with sheep, goats, deer, birds and moufflon (the wild sheep of Cyprus). On deep bowls, animal heads alternate with disks incised with concentric or rayed circles. Similar rayed circles appear on other vessels, along with swastikas, crosses, concentric rectangles and zigzags, herringbone, dotted and other motifs.

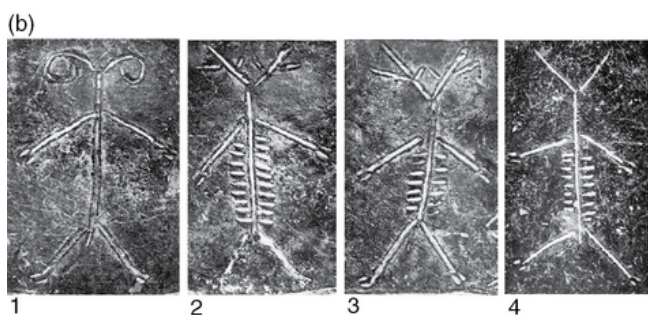
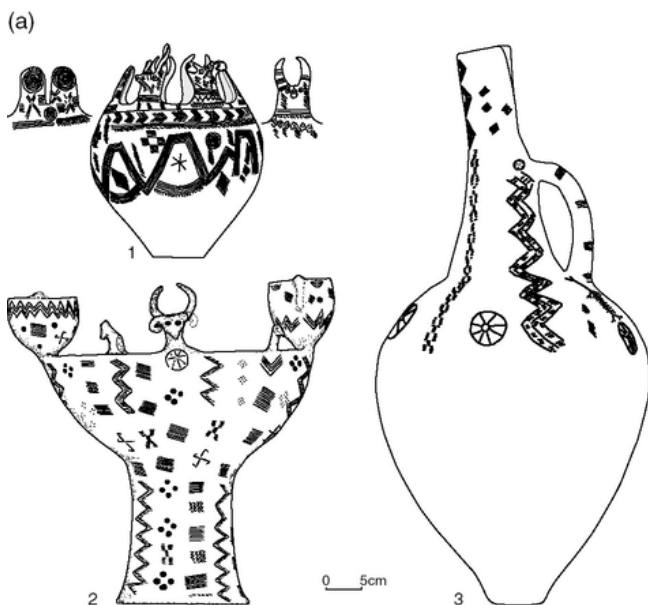


Figure 36.4. (a) EC ritual vessels from Vounous: 1. Tomb 155.1, after Åström and Merrillees (2003: fig. 3); prepared by Cathy Carigiet. 2. Tomb 160A.13, after Hennessy (1974: fig. 1.1); prepared by Cathy Carigiet. 3. Tomb 160A.16, after Hennessy (1974: fig. 1.2); prepared by Cathy Carigiet. (Animal-headed figures on Vounous Tomb 91.14 (1–3) and Tomb 160A.16 (4), after Stewart and Stewart (1950: pl. XCIIIa–d); prepared by Wei Ming.

Of particular interest are antlered, bull- and ram- or moufflon-horned, cloven-hoofed figures which appear on two vessels from Vounous (Figure 36.4b) (Stewart and Stewart 1950: pl. XCIII). Depicted upright in an attitude of

display, they may represent supernatural beings, humans in animal skins or the transformation of humans into animals. They suggest that funerals involved dancing and other performances focused on horned animals. Such symbolism is widespread in pre-state societies, where animals serve variously as communication devices, metaphors, emblems, sacrifices, food in redistributive or competitive feasts or quantitative measures of sacredness, wealth or power (Huntingdon and Metcalf 1979; Willis 1994). The horned figures from Vounous appear with rayed disks and vertical zigzags, suggesting an association with the sky, sun and rain and by extension with fertility. A similar connection between death and regeneration can be found in many societies, in which metaphors of rebirth serve to transcend the finality of death (Bradley 2005: 204–207; Parker Pearson 1999: 143–44; Bloch and Parry 1982).

A cosmology based on cattle and other horned species and solar, lunar and other natural phenomena clearly reached a considerable degree of iconographic complexity at Vounous. There can be little doubt that burial was a key arena for the development of this iconography. While the nature and extent of formal status distinctions remain unclear, feasting and other practices related to death and burial are likely to have promoted new forms of social identity and authority. Complex ritual vessels, however, were broadly dispersed, and the manipulation of material culture in the mortuary domain appears to have been widespread (Keswani 2004: 197–98). Emerging social identities may have sought expression in access to ritual knowledge and control of ancestral facilities rather than in disparate distributions of material wealth. Such attempts to naturalise authority make particular appeal to social memory (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983: 9), and may have focused on burial facilities as both tangible and symbolic reminders of connections with ancestors.

Towards the end of the EC period, there is an increased emphasis among north-coast communities on subgroup identity. Peltenburg (1994: 159) argues that this involved the appearance of weapon-bearing elites who attempted to

legitimise this new hierarchical order through the use of more permanent forms of ritual authority, giving rise to more widely recognisable symbols of power and exclusion. The development of compartmentalised and multiple vessels at Vounous and Lapithos may reflect such moves towards more formalised practice, perhaps involving prescribed rites of libation or offering rather than shared consumption. The appearance of standardised ceramic motifs at this time similarly suggests an increasingly formulaic kind of communication and a decrease in the role played by small bowls, in particular, in individualised social interaction.

Elsewhere on the island, EC tomb assemblages show far less evidence for the manipulation of material culture and the elaboration of mortuary rites. With some notable exceptions, the pottery repertoire is distinguished by a restricted range of shapes and by minimal decoration (Webb and Frankel 2008: 290). Tombs in the centre and south of Cyprus are also typically small chambers or pits with minimal entrance shafts. They contain few objects other than pottery vessels and show little evidence of multigenerational use. These communities thus appear to have been subject to lower levels of social pressure than those in the north. Here, social approval may have been won through conformity rather than competition, implying more egalitarian community structures, or else that status negotiation did not involve burial display or ceramic innovation. These differences in levels of stylistic investment suggest significant cross-island disparity in the intensity with which material culture and ancestral links were used to validate claims to social and ritual authority.

During the MC period (ca. 1900–1650 BC), the dynamic eating and drinking practices performed in connection with EC burials in north-coast communities spread across the rest of the island. At the same time, there is an increase in the size of tomb chambers and a move towards the long-term retention of skeletal remains and grave goods. This is best seen in the extensive MC cemeteries at Deneia, where the assertion of status and intergenerational rights through the construction of large family tombs appears to have been a

significant element in the negotiation of social practice (Frankel and Webb 2007: 146–51). As these tombs could not have been constructed in response to a recent death (given their size and long-term use), there is a strong implication of tomb building as an assertive act with inherited rights and associations. This is likely to have been accompanied by a shift in the nature of funerary ceremonies from broadly shared expressions of community identity to restricted kin-based events, emphasising links to particular ancestors and foreshadowing the emergence of ‘private’ tombs in the town centres of the LC period.

Beyond Death and Burial

The few excavated EC and MC settlements provide some evidence for special-purpose locales directed by local belief systems. Of most interest is Unit 12 at Sotira *Kaminoudhia* (Swiny 2008). It consists of a rectangular courtyard separated from three smaller spaces by parapet walls. The narrow space at the rear features three large boulders at the base of a 5–6 m high wall covered with white plaster. The courtyard contained a deep stone ‘basin’, surrounded by percussion tools, an axe and a copper chisel. The main feature in the room to the west was a waist-high grinding platform with two querns on its surface and room for two more. Near the platform stood a second, large, finely carved stone basin. The complex contained a restricted array of vessel types, mostly consisting of juglets, dippers and bowls.

The grinding platform is unique in the excavated record. Eight near-contemporary vessels with modelled decoration, however, show four women standing or kneeling before a similar platform working rubber/quern combinations identical to those found at Sotira (Karageorghis 1991: 117–26). These objects suggest that cereal processing was occasionally a communal task or that the people involved sometimes practiced a multiple grinding system, in which grain was sequentially treated on a series of querns in a process of gradual reduction (Storck and Teague 1952: 53, figs 28–29). On all eight vessels, the grinding platform is associated with a large mortar in which a substance is

pounded by a figure with a long pestle. These resemble the 'basins' at Sotira, which may have been used to de-husk grain prior to grinding. In addition to cereal processing, the vessels show baking, winemaking and other activities. Usually identified as 'genre scenes', they may depict preparations for ritual or ceremonial events. At Marki *Alonia* and elsewhere, querns were found individually or associated with small mealing bins (Frankel and Webb 2006: 221). Multiple grinding was not routine domestic practice.

In this respect and others, the complex at Sotira is anomalous. It appears to have been used for the shared preparation of food, possibly using a technique of sequential grinding. These activities may have been linked with kin-based or more broadly communal feasting associated with major seasonal or life-cycle events. By the beginning of the MC period, if not before, such preparations had been incorporated into modelled scenes on large bowls, amphorae and jugs, examples of which have been found at Kalavassos and Marki (Karageorghis 1991: 117–26). Together with the evidence from Sotira, they suggest common symbolic practices beyond the level of the household across the south and centre of the island in the early second millennium BC.

Extra-household consumption events or subgroup feasting may also be indicated elsewhere in the settlement record. At Alambra *Mouttes*, communal, possibly ceremonial activity has been suggested for Room 8 of Building IV, which contained a large hearth, quantities of animal bone and an unusually large number of juglets and small bowls, possibly representing paired drinking sets (Coleman *et al.* 1996: 77, 85–91). A similar function is proposed for Unit 10 at Sotira *Kaminoudhia*, an open space with a large number of small bowls and an ox skull (Swiny 2003: 46–47). While no such areas were identified at Marki, cooking pots with a capacity of more than 16 litres suggest occasional preparation of meals beyond normal domestic requirements (Webb and Frankel 2008: 292).

If the household was itself a setting for ritual, this may have involved the use of items indistinct from those in everyday use. The symbolic importance of the hearth is

suggested by the form and decoration of clay hearth surrounds, some of which recall the facial features of contemporary figurines (Frankel and Webb 2006: 18, figs 2.5–2.7). Other practices with a symbolic dimension in the domestic record at Marki *Alonia* may include the attachment of antlers to central roof posts, the occasional burial of women and children in disused hearth rooms, the repeated clearance of courtyards, the dismantling and inversion of querns, the frequent alignment of house walls at an offset from predecessor buildings and other aspects of house construction, renovation and replacement (Frankel and Webb 2006). Small terracotta zoomorphs, almost all depicting cattle, show exposure to fire and breakage patterns that suggest some form of structured behaviour in relation to their use (Frankel and Webb 2006: 157–58, fig. 5.4). Major events in the history of the household may have been marked regularly by the deposition of cultural material and other symbolic practices.

The beginnings of metallurgy in Cyprus are also likely to have been accompanied by specific beliefs and practices. These are not yet visible, although claims have been made for ritual facilities in MC copper workshops at Pyrgos *Mavrorachi* (Belgiorio 2000: 10–11). Food production, animal husbandry and domestic crafts are also likely to have been viewed as more than technical, economic or instrumental processes (Bradley 2005: 88). The hunting of deer and moufflon played an important role in earlier periods and may also have been ritualised in the Bronze Age, as suggested by the appearance of these species on elaborate vessels and drinking cups. More generally, the iconographic data link cattle in particular to communal ritual (Keswani 1994). At all excavated settlements, cattle provided the bulk of the meat supply, highlighting the economic as well as socio-ideological importance of this species.

Anthropomorphic figurines appeared towards the end of the EC period. They depict flat, stylised figures without overt sexual characteristics or with breasts (Karageorghis 1991: 49–102). Variants include figures holding infants, cradled infants and two- or three-headed figures. Their depositional

contexts tell us little about their social life, whether as agents in life-cycle rituals (Morris 1985: 161–62), emblems of status, identity or gender (Knapp and Meskell 1997: 189; Bolger 2003: 108) or generic ancestor figures (Talalay and Cullen 2002: 189). The concentration of figurines on the north coast suggests that they originated in this part of the island and are linked in some way with the relief figure in Karmi *Palealona* Tomb 6. This again highlights the role played by north-coast communities in the materialisation of symbolic ideas and concepts in the EC period.

Beyond these broad observations, EC and MC ritual practice remains elusive. There is a clear symbolic use of material culture, as well as evidence for the physical expression of symbolic relationships. Death and burial were major contexts in which rituals were created and performed. Other aspects of life given emphasis through investment in ritual action are likely to have included other life-cycle, seasonal and agricultural events, settlement and cemetery foundations and house replacements. The ritual use of animals, especially cattle, is evident in the funerary, settlement and iconographic record. Whether this involved the formal recognition of higher, unseen powers as having control over human destiny and the organised ‘worship’ of such powers, or less systematic, localised and fluid concepts involving tradition, performance and prescribed ways of behaving remains unclear. The extent to which ritual performance served as a basis of social power is also not yet visible beyond Vounous. Access to the supernatural and control of ritual knowledge, however, frequently provide a means of negotiating status in small-scale societies, and this is likely to have been the case with varying impacts on material culture and practice across the island prior to the LC period.

The Late Cypriot Period (ca. 1650–1050 BC)

Towards the end of the MC period, an increasing external demand for Cypriot copper and other commodities led to a

widespread movement of people to coastal areas. The geopolitical configuration of the island during the earlier part of the LC period is the subject of considerable debate (see, most comprehensively, Knapp 2008: 324–41; 2013: 432–47), but there can be no doubt that Enkomi emerged during the sixteenth century BC as a paramount centre on the east coast. This fledgling polity may not have been able to establish island-wide authority, but it dominated foreign relations and established and maintained control over the mining, distribution and export of Cypriot copper. Some 22 forts or fortified sites built in strategic locations in the north, centre and east of the island at this time appear to have been part of a strategy, initiated by Enkomi, of long-distance control of copper mining, as well as of a broader process of local elite behaviour, including the adoption of prestige Levantine symbolism (Peltenburg 1996; 2008; Crewe 2007: 158).

The principal catalyst for the relatively abrupt transition to greater social complexity and urbanisation in the LC period was undoubtedly long-distance trade and contact with existing polities outside the island on the part of people based primarily at Enkomi. This long-distance trade, principally in copper, had a critical disruptive impact on the local and regional political economy. Imported luxury items, architectural styles and aspects of mortuary treatment rapidly evolved into a new ‘political currency’ and were used to create and index status differences within and beyond Enkomi, and to motivate surplus production. Emerging elites also had rapidly to evolve, adapt or adopt new dominance mechanisms. These involved both direct physical coercion and ideological sanctions developed to ensure longer-term compliance among those engaged in the extraction, smelting and transport of copper.

During the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, Enkomi appears to have maintained its position as head of a unified Cypriot polity, within a centrally organised system of regionally based administrative centres, the latter managed by local elites whose authority rested largely on the control of regional resources (Knapp 2008: 335–41). A series of

destructions or abandonments at the close of the thirteenth century may have been brought about at least in part by a decrease in external demand for Cypriot copper. Extensive restructuring at this time did not, however, involve a radical break, and there is evidence for continuity and economic and industrial intensification in those towns that survived the disruptions, principally Kition, Enkomi and Kouklia (Sherratt 1998: 296–306; Voskos and Knapp 2008: 664–73). These key centres witnessed a return to, or stabilisation of, centralised authority in the twelfth century that allowed them to take advantage of new cultural and commercial links with the southern Levant, Syria, Cilicia and Egypt (Knapp 2008: 246–47).

Alongside these developments, the LC period saw a rapid institutionalisation of ritual practice and the emergence of a coercive ritual ideology. The mechanisms behind these developments are obscured by an absence of ritual structures from the period during which Enkomi was engaged in establishing authority on the east coast. Most identified LC cult sites belong to the later years of the regional centres and the period immediately following their devolution (Webb 1999: 21–113, table 1). Moreover, a disproportionate amount of data comes from the extensively excavated sites of Enkomi and Kition. There is as yet no evidence for cult places located on mountain peaks, beside caves or springs, although these may well have existed. On the contrary, most structures appear to have been established to meet the needs of a complex urban and regional infrastructure and were explicitly linked with human exploitation of the landscape.

The Early Years: Negotiating Authority and Ritual Compliance at Enkomi

Enkomi played a major role in the negotiation of authority and compliance on Cyprus in the early stages of the LBA. In the absence of structural evidence from this period, we need to turn to other areas of the material record to understand the processes through which ritual practice became embedded in constructs that provided a conceptual basis for elite control over wealth production and sociopolitical

inequality.

The material correlates of high status at Enkomi, primarily visible in mortuary contexts, reflect foreign connections, either as imports or as bearers of imported iconographies (Keswani 1989; Webb 2005). Mostly objects of adornment or those linked with consumption behaviours, they functioned as rank insignia and items of competitive display. Such strategies may be expected to have been particularly important during the early years of polity formation, when functionally similar elite groups were competing for control of long-distance networks and internal resources. Longer-term stability, however, required the compliance of the wider population and ideological and organisational mechanisms that would ensure their cooperation. Mythology and ritual are active factors in prescribing behaviour. Both serve to transform the natural into the supernatural, define identities and legitimise power and wealth differentials. They may, in turn, be exploited through control and manipulation of the symbolic information invested in material culture. Ideological messages requesting or enforcing non-elite compliance are embedded in many aspects of the archaeological record. In Cyprus, the richest surviving source of politico-ideological information is provided by the complex imagery on cylinder seals.

Imported cylinder seals first appear in Cyprus in the late seventeenth century BC; local manufacture began during the late sixteenth century BC. The great majority of imported and locally engraved seals come from Enkomi, which was a primary centre of glyptic production (Webb 2002). The finest, most complex engraving appears on seals of the so-called *Elaborate Style*. These show formal presentation scenes in which deities are attended by sphinxes or animal-headed ministrants (Figure 36.5a). They are likely to have been engraved by full-time specialists attached to centralised authorities. *Derivative Style* seals frequently show a heroic or semi-divine female figure with a subject lion, griffin or caprid – or a kilted male figure in similar attitude (Figure 36.5b). Others depict ritual performances or adoration of a tree by griffins, lions or caprids. While these seals are

unlikely to have been carved in the same workshops as those of the Elaborate Style, their restricted distribution suggests that they were also produced under elite sponsorship. A third seal group, those of the *Common Style*, are characterised by recurrent compositions depicting schematic human figures, real world animals, symbols of cult observance and talismanic designs. Cylinders of this type are relatively widely dispersed throughout the settlement hierarchy (see Knapp [2008](#): 134–44).



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 36.5. Elaborate Style (a), Derivative Style (b) and Common Style (c) seals (Dikaios [1969](#): pls 180/4, 182A/4b,

reproduced with the permission of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus; and Porada 1976: fig. 77).

Seals are likely to have played a significant role in the dissemination of ideological messages and ritual concepts. Elite control over their production, moreover, could easily be translated into control of the symbolism of power by direct reference to ritual authority. Ownership of Elaborate Style seals, in particular, may have served to legitimise claims to political power and to promote a privileged relationship with the supernatural realm, giving expression to notions of a divine order based on the recognition of hierarchy. Similarly, Derivative Style iconography appears to draw on heroic narratives in which order and harmony are achieved through the defeat of dangerous forces. The sphinxes, lions and griffins used as status insignia on prestige objects appear on Elaborate and Derivative Style seals as subjects, ministrants or offerings. These points of articulation suggest that political elites appropriated the responsibility for mediating between the natural and supernatural worlds. This cosmological rhetoric is principally concerned with the reproduction of order through hierarchy, presenting a reified ideological model which both mirrors and displaces the real relations of power and control that emerged at Enkomi and perhaps elsewhere in the sixteenth and fifteenth centuries BC.

Common Style iconography is less dependent on external models but is also predominantly ideological. Common Style seals are concerned with the observance of ritual, subservience to human authority and motifs that appear to be operationally linked with the management of the copper industry. The most frequent of these shows a human figure, bucranium, ingots, circles and trees (Figure 36.5c). The repeated representation of these symbols may have been intended to promote ideological links between human labour, the copper industry and divine authority (Knapp 1986: 37–42; Webb 1999: 276–79). While this seal group is unlikely to pre-date the fourteenth century BC, the co-option

of divine authority to promote elite management of the copper industry may long have been a key element in the ideological underpinning of urbanisation and polity formation in Cyprus.

Other evidence suggests considerable homogeneity in mortuary and domestic ceremonial across the island in the first half of the LC period (ca. 1650–1400 BC). Exclusively used for funerary purposes, more than 200 bull-shaped vessels have been found at widely dispersed sites (Webb 1999: 200–201). Similar numbers of largely identical female figurines are present in both habitation and burial contexts (Webb 1999: 209–11). The mechanisms by which these objects became standard items in the LC symbolic repertoire and the timing of their spread across the island is uncertain. The earliest examples of both vessels and figurines, however, have been found at Enkomi or related eastern sites. The derivation of the earliest LC figures from north Syrian terracottas (Budin 2003: 143–44) also points to the east coast as the most likely point of origin. The standardised production and use of bull vessels and female figurines from the fifteenth century BC reflects a widely shared set of symbols across much of the island and an increasing frequency of small-scale ceremonial activity based on a common set of material components and obligations.

One of the earliest cult buildings in the LC record is located on a low hillock at Athienou *Bamboulari tis Koukounninas* in the hinterland of Enkomi (Webb 1999: 21–29). The poorly preserved remains comprise a rectangular court bordered by small rooms. Some 10,000 vessels, mostly miniature juglets and bowls, were found in pits and heaps, along with more than 300 kg of metallic waste. The presence of the latter led the excavators to propose that Athienou was established to meet the needs of a specialised cult related to the extraction and processing of copper ore located on a communication route from one or more ore bodies in the Troodos foothills, to refinery and transshipment points on the east coast. On-site metalworking, however, seems unlikely (Kassianidou 2005: 137–38), raising the possibility that this material was brought from elsewhere for ritual/symbolic

reasons. A parallel assemblage of miniature vessels, metal waste and mould and crucible fragments at Kalopsidha, to the east, suggests a site of similar type (Webb 1999: 113–16). Both locales may have been set up by Enkomi as part of a direct procurement strategy in the early stages of the LBA. They suggest that large-scale communal participation in ritual performances played a significant role in attempts to build organisational structures in the hinterland.

The Later Years: Multiple Elite Constructions of Ritual Practice

No urban cult buildings are known from the period during which the regional centres of the fourteenth century BC were being established. The construction of substantial administrative buildings at Kalavassos *Ayios Dhimitrios*, Maroni *Vournes* and Alassa *Palaeotaverna* and elsewhere is, however, seen as a strategy of elite identity construction and place-making, and is cited as evidence for the exercise and manipulation of ritualised authority by competing power groups (Fisher 2009; this volume; Knapp 2009). Specifically, Manning (1998: 51) suggests that the construction of the ‘Basin Building’ at Maroni in an area previously used as a cemetery reflects the rise of a dominant lineage whose claim to authority was expressed by building over the tombs of other lineage groups. Intensive deposition of prestige goods in burials of the mid- and later fourteenth century BC may similarly reflect factional rivalry as this new order was negotiated. This suggests that the legitimisation of political power in regional centres was closely linked with ancestral authority and that domination and resistance were played out through the maintenance or destruction of ancestral burial plots, conspicuous funerary practice and the construction of monumental buildings. The role of formal cult observance in the establishment of such ‘ritualised authority’ is unclear.

The majority of excavated cult buildings date to the late thirteenth or early twelfth century BC. This is undoubtedly a construct of archaeological visibility. Sites occupied across this horizon have been intensely excavated, and

monumental ritual architecture, introduced at the end of the thirteenth century BC, has a higher visibility than other building types. Nevertheless, the number, size and complexity of ritual structures increased markedly at this time. Ritual centres at Kouklia, Ayia Irini and Idalion were built or refurbished in the late thirteenth or early twelfth century BC. At Kition, two cult places established in the late thirteenth century were replaced in the early twelfth century by four buildings, each (with the exception of Temple 2) larger and more monumental than their predecessors. Greater complexity in the use and organisation of the sacred quarter at Kition is also indicated by the addition of formal access routes, walled courtyards and workshops for the production of metal goods and textiles. At Enkomi, several possible cult buildings of the thirteenth century BC have been identified (Webb 1999: 116–19, 130–32). The Sanctuaries of the Horned God and Double Goddess were introduced to the Ashlar Building in the twelfth century BC and the Sanctuary of the Ingot God established in the twelfth century BC, probably over a thirteenth-century predecessor (Webb 1999: 91–113, 119–22).

Monumentality is a key feature of twelfth-century BC ritual architecture at Kition, Kouklia *Palaipaphos* and Myrtou *Pigadhes*. The use of ashlar masonry was accompanied by elements exclusively associated with cult, namely stepped capitals, high platforms and horns of consecration. In particular, Kition Temple 1 and Sanctuary I at Kouklia (Figure 36.6), both constructed of enormous ashlar blocks, show that local authorities were able to command substantial investments of labour. The reorganisation and intensification of copper production and other sectors of the economy following the demise of other regional centres is likely to have prompted considerable investment in ceremonial activity aimed at legitimising the initiatives of entrepreneurial elites. The elaboration of the Kition sacred quarter in the early twelfth century BC suggests that this occurred rapidly and on a significant scale. A similar authority structure and developmental sequence may be assumed at Kouklia and perhaps Myrtou. Control of sacred action appears to have been a major component of social

power and monumental architecture, an overt strategy used by political elites to legitimise and extend their authority. At Kition, where the sacred quarter dates from the foundation of the town, cult practice appears to have complemented kin-based or other systems of control, either creating or reflecting a socially integrated legitimate authority (for a different view, see Smith 2009: 244–54).



Figure 36.6. The courtyard wall of Sanctuary I at Kouklia. Photograph by Jennifer M. Webb.

The situation may have been markedly different at Enkomi. Here, the construction of new cult places during the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC suggests that an earlier system of ritual authority gave way to more dispersed arrangements at this time. In a re-examination of the Fortress Building, Pickles and Peltenburg (1998) argue for a similar complex devolution from centralised to decentralised authority. From the sixteenth to the fourteenth centuries BC, copper-working appears to have been almost exclusively located in the Fortress, a large ashlar building that dominated the town. At the beginning of the thirteenth century BC, it was rearranged to form independent metalworking facilities in a process accompanied by a broad distribution of copper-working residues across the site. Pickles and Peltenburg suggest that the disintegration of the Fortress reflects a breakdown of centralised authority and the emergence of competing groups who established

production and mortuary facilities in various quarters of the town.

The cult buildings at Enkomi postdate the breakdown of centralised authority. Their dispersed location suggests that factional or lineage groups utilised different cult sites and appealed to different deities in an attempt to assert ancestral authority in a destabilised environment. The installation of the Sanctuaries of the Horned God and Double Goddess in an elite residential building provides an additional argument for 'private' or restricted control. Similarly, a clustering of ashlar-built tombs in Quarters 4E and 5E suggests the presence of a residential elite in this part of the town. The construction of the Sanctuary of the Ingot God in Quarter 5E may also have been a manifestation of localised authority, perhaps in opposition to those responsible for the introduction of the Horned God and Double Goddess to the Ashlar Building. Notably, this increase in the intensity of ritual activity at Enkomi did not result in the architectural elaboration of ritual structures, suggesting that competing groups did not command the same resources as the locally centralised authorities at Kition and Kouklia.

Elite control and use of facilities are thus indicated for all urban cult sites of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC (see also Fisher 2009; this volume). At Kition, Kouklia and Myrtou, a significant investment of wealth, energy and labour was expended in the formal differentiation of elite from non-elite observance. Open spaces, probably once the locus of community participation, became walled courtyards that screened ritual activities from general view. Even in the largest cult buildings, interior spaces could have accommodated only relatively small numbers of people. The scale of the innermost rooms implies that these were the domains of ritual specialists. This manipulation of sacred space and the establishment of offering requirements involving objects and animals of considerable material value convey the increasingly elite dimension of ritual within urban centres and suggest that participation in observances at these sites was not shared across boundaries of rank and class. These settings, in turn, shaped social practice, marking

activities as removed from the everyday, distinguishing performers from spectators, permitting and restricting access and limiting the potential for deviation. At Enkomi, despite the lack of monumentality, material residues also suggest conspicuous display and the manipulation of unique images. For other sectors of the community, these cult sites must have served as potent manifestations of ritual and political power.

Elite or restricted participation is not indicated at smaller, rural cult centres. At Idalion and Ayia Irini, simple two-room cult buildings, similar in layout but considerably smaller than their urban counterparts, were associated with open courtyards and minimally differentiated from surrounding structures (Webb 1999: 53–58, 84–91). Residual assemblages contain few exotics and limited evidence of animal sacrifice. The huge deposits of miniature vessels at Athienou and Kalopsidha likewise suggest large-scale participation. Within urban centres, non-elite ritual observance – if formally constructed – is not yet visible.

The Nature of Late Cypriot Cult

Forty years ago, Catling (1971: 30) proposed that the management of the copper industry in Cyprus was ‘temple-based’. This thesis was significantly redefined by Knapp (1986; 1996), for whom those aspects of the material record that link ritual observance with metalworking were created by elites dependent on the domination of copper production and distribution, who secured and perpetuated that domination by manipulating ritual ideology and its accompanying insignia. Thus, culturally significant symbols served to legitimise those whose economic interests were promoted by associating copper production with divine favour. In a recent review, Kassianidou (2005) also argues against formal ritual control over copper production at any time during the Bronze Age.

A clear ideological link between cult and metallurgy, however, is apparent in the iconography of the ‘Ingot God’, recovered from the Sanctuary of the Ingot God, and the unprovenanced ‘Bomford Goddess’, both of which stand on

ingot-shaped bases (Figure 36.7b–c). Other indicators of the importance of the copper industry include Common Style seal iconography, miniature copper ingots and ingot-bearers depicted in offering scenes on bronze stands (Knapp 1986; Papasavvas 2009). Most of this evidence comes from Enkomi. Athienou and Kalopsidha, where ritual practice involved copper mining and processing residues, were similarly located in the Enkomi hinterland. The wealth of exotics in mortuary deposits, the evidence for large-scale copper production and the predominantly eastern character of Cypriot pottery exports leave no doubt that Enkomi was pre-eminent in both the production and export of copper for most if not all of the LC period. This site also appears to have been the source of much of the coercive iconography underpinning the copper industry.



Figure 36.7. (a) The Horned God. Photo: Courtesy of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. (b) The Ingot God. Courtesy of the Director of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. (c) The Bomford Goddess. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Copper, however, was only one element within a broader cultural system. The economic base of both elites and non-elites involved the exploitation of an array of other goods, including timber, grain, olive oil, pottery, textiles and perhaps opium (Knapp 1991). If ritual systems are mechanisms by which socio-economic relations are established and reinforced, a greater diversity of ritual constructs and sites may be expected. These should exhibit regional and chronological variation in response to localised and broader conditions. The focus on cult and metallurgy should not blind us to this diversity and may have been overstated. Small metal items are present in most assemblages. Material value, however, was a key consideration in the choice of ritual paraphernalia, and the presentation of metal along with faience, glass, ivory and imported pottery is likely to have been an expression of a wider social reality, as well as, or rather than, ideologically or ritually prescribed.

Considerable diversity is in fact visible within and between ritual sites in the urban centres of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC. Residues reflect particular economic emphases and local strategies of ideological legitimisation. Most obvious is the use of more than 100 stone anchors in ritual construction *loci* and as a focus of ritual action at Kition (Webb 1999: 184–87). These include the largest anchors known from Cyprus and examples with markings, cupules and burning. A preoccupation with seafaring is also evident in the ship images carved on the wall of ‘Temple 1’ and the recovery of 84 marine shells and pottery with marine motifs in ‘Temple 2’ (Basch and Artzy 1985; Reese 1985). This suggests a conceptual relationship between cult and maritime trade at Kition of at least equal importance to that between cult and metallurgy. Furthermore, the association of standing anchor, hearth, bucrania and casting facilities in Room 12 of the ‘Northern Workshops’ links some aspects of metallurgy with seafaring and cult, and may reflect the *raison d’être* for the establishment of the town and its role in the sea-borne metals trade.

The evidence from Kition suggests that long-distance trade

was of paramount importance in the politico-ideological status of elite groups responsible for the wealth of this and other coastal sites in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC. As Helms (1988; 1993), followed by Knapp (1998; 2006), has argued, objects, knowledge and experiences obtained from distant lands are frequently imbued with latent power and have the capacity to increase the prestige of those who acquire them. At Kition, the number and quality of thirteenth-century BC Aegean imports suggests that such exotica were pivotal in the ritual legitimisation of authority. Long-distance trade is also represented in the assemblages of the twelfth century BC, suggesting that the acquisition and discard of foreign goods remained a successful strategy of ritual consumption. The physical connection between cult and metallurgical facilities at Kition is not evident prior to this time. Proximity to the city gate and harbour facilities is more likely to have been the main factor in the initial location of the 'sacred' area.

Further indications of localised patterns in cult practice include the dedication of miniature bronze tools and weapons in the Sanctuary of the Horned God at Enkomi, evidence for possible opium-related rituals in 'Temples' 4 and 5 at Kition and the importance of *Dama mesopotamica* at Myrtou *Pigadhes* where remains of at least 41 animals were found at the foot of a high stone platform. Other evidence suggests a degree of common practice between sites and possibly deity-specific equipment and performances. Incised ox scapulae, for example, perhaps used in divination practices, occur at Myrtou, Kition and Enkomi (Webb 1999: 249–50). At Enkomi, they were recovered in substantial numbers in the Sanctuary of the Ingot God but not in the Sanctuaries of the Horned God and Double Goddess. At Kition, they were associated only with 'Temples' 4 and 5. Terracotta masks, showing a young bearded male, were found in copper workshops at Enkomi and Kition and in 'Temple 5' at Kition (Webb 1999: 222), while ox-skulls, cleaned of projecting bones and possibly worn as masks, were mounted on poles or hung from walls at Kition and in the Sanctuary of the Ingot God at Enkomi.

While new economic imperatives are clearly reflected in ritual practice, older concepts were not forgotten. Horned animals, particularly cattle, continued to play a major role in iconography and performance. The robed figures who receive offerings on Elaborate Style seals (Figure 36.5a) and both the Horned God and Ingot God (Figure 36.7a–b) wear horned headgear, suggesting that horns served as generic attributes of divinity. Faunal remains associated with LC cult places are predominantly of juvenile or young adult cattle (Webb 1999: 250–52). Terracotta or bronze bull figures are present in most assemblages, although their number varies considerably. More than 30 terracotta bulls from Alassa *Pano Mandilares* include 10 or more from installations possibly associated with household ritual (Hadjisavvas 1989: 36–39). Multiple bull figurines were also recovered in rural cult buildings at Ayia Irini and Idalion. More recently, a ritual function has been suggested for a small room in a building used for processing and storing agricultural products at inland Arediou *Vouppes*, which contained several bull and one horse figurine (Steel 2009: 140–43). Images of animals, especially bulls, may have been associated in particular with domestic and rural cults, retaining their validity despite increasing regional control over agricultural production.

In sum, differing site histories and varied trajectories towards urbanisation appear to have led to differences in the number, size and location of cult buildings and differing sets of ritual insignia. While peer polity interaction may help to explain the broad overlay of architectural conventions and ritual paraphernalia in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC, distinctions in cult practice and iconography reflect regional or site-based economic orientations, differences in organisational structure and probably varying degrees of interaction with non-Cypriot belief systems. The ideological connection between cult and metallurgy was established early in the LC period at Enkomi and may always have been a distinguishing feature of ritual performance and iconography at this site. While visible elsewhere, greater diversity in ritual practice is evident in the regional centres of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BC. At the same time, while urban settlements moved towards monumentality,

anthropomorphism and conspicuous display, small-scale domestic ritual and rural cult sites appear to have operated more inclusively and maintained a traditional focus on agriculture and animal husbandry.

It seems unlikely that island-wide uniformity in ritual practice existed at any time during the LBA. Enkomi's influence, however, extended over much of the island throughout this period and appears critically to have determined the nature of ritual iconography and action. The cross-regional use of similar ritual architecture and symbols in the second half of the LC period is to be read against a background of locally variable systems of organisation and ideology and the adoption of new modes of symbolism by emerging regional centres in different parts of the island. The similarities may reflect the political and ideological predominance of Enkomi and common MC traditions, as well as familiarity, interaction and emulation. Beyond this, marked differences suggest localised practices and preferences and perhaps the emergence of local deities.

Conclusion

The evolutionary trajectory of ritual in Cyprus is part of a larger historical narrative. Archaeology is particularly well suited to looking at the relationship between ritual and socio-economic change and the role played by material culture in structuring ritual practice and organising its transmission. In the case of Cyprus, where literacy arrived late (compared to the rest of the eastern Mediterranean) and is likely to have been restricted, the dissemination of belief systems to other sectors of society must have taken place largely through objects and images, the architectural specification of ritual spaces, oral traditions and ritual performances.

Of particular interest are changes in the relationship between the ritual, economic and political domains. In small-scale societies, social action and ritual performance frequently act as motivations for economic change, as the demand for socially valued goods linked with ritualised

behaviours results in the specialised production of 'extraordinary' material culture (Spielmann 2002). This is of particular relevance to the earlier periods of the Bronze Age and most especially to the mortuary evidence from Vounous. There, burial was a key setting for ritual discourse and related practices, including feasting, and led to a sustained demand for ritually charged objects produced in what Spielmann (2002) has characterised as a 'ritual mode of production'. This elaboration of material culture was related to the negotiation of social identity, and thus ritual was already a setting for contentious interaction. At Vounous, however, status negotiation appears to have been relatively fluid and widespread. Ceremonial events were probably used to develop, maintain and renegotiate social relationships, in which the success of individuals and groups waxed and waned while the ritual realm endured as a context for display, interaction and consumption (Spielmann 2002: 196). In this scenario, specialised craft production is a by-product of ritual participation, and ritual is a primary arena in which variation and change in economic practices are to be seen and understood.

With increasing political centralisation, social action and ritual performance became subservient to the political economy and the needs of aspiring elites, leading to corporate control of ritual and ideology. New modes of economic production impacted directly on ritual practice, and new beliefs about hierarchy and dominance were embedded in iconography and performance. Ritual became a primary locus of political authority, a source of power and legitimisation in a rapidly changing society. Usurpation of ritual knowledge by political actors was used to outdo competitors, impress followers and impose socially coercive sanctions. At Enkomi, existing deities appear to have been co-opted early into the metal industry, effectively aligning the ritual and political economy and providing ideological legitimacy for new systems of authority and administration. While regional centres of the latter half of the LC period continued to be reliant on the copper industry, this aspect of LC ritual may never have been as dominant as at Enkomi, allowing these urban settlements to develop their own

modes of ritual expression.

The LC period witnessed a move away from concerns with the natural world and the agricultural cycle to a focus on economic wealth and political authority. In the coastal centres, this led to an increasingly complex and manipulated iconography of social power and probably to the emergence of religious specialists and new mythological narratives reflecting a more complex human world. While at all stages of the Bronze Age ritual was tied to identity, power and legitimacy, earlier fluid and dynamic associations gave way to structured, non-negotiable relationships. This institutionalisation of ritual authority and subversion of symbolic behaviour in the LC period demonstrates the critical role of ritual as an evolutionary force, particularly during the emergence of politically centralised societies.

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37 Cult Activities among Central and North Italian Protohistoric Communities

Alessandro Guidi

Abstract

One of the crucial points in any historical theory is the role of religion in society, which is generally seen from two fundamentally different points of view: the Marxist notion that ideology is completely dependent on socio-economic ‘structure’, and Émile Durkheim’s view that religion is the origin of every social institution. Marxist scholars such as Antonio Gramsci have subsequently focused on ideology in the creation of social structures, while others such as Marvin Harris have stressed the overwhelming role of economy in the creation of religious myths and taboos. Archaeology could provide the key for testing these views.

A good case study is that of cult activities between the Early Bronze and early Iron Ages (2300–700/500 BC) in central and northern Italy. From a primitive idea of religion whose typical expression is the use of caves as cult places (deeply embedded in the oldest prehistory), the communities of these regions shifted their beliefs towards an anthropomorphic religion, around the time that the funerary rite and model of ‘chiefdom-like’ society spread. When Early State social organisation came about around the end of the second and the beginning of the first millennium BC, civic religion with priests, temples and its paraphernalia stood out as a key transformation of society. In this chapter, I explore this complex social trajectory in order to try to detect the nodal

points of the transformations of cult activities in the archaeological record of protohistoric central and northern Italy.

Introduction

What is the role of religion? The orthodox Marxist position is that religion (and ideology, as a whole) is a 'superstructure' and completely independent from economic and social structure. This idea was challenged by the French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1912), whose *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* regards religion as, on the one hand, the main experience through which single individuals feel themselves part of a society and, on the other, the origin of any great institution.

'Participation' in the natural environment in one way or another as a key factor of religion in primitive societies is the leading concept that Lévy-Bruhl put forward in his work in the 1930s, suggesting a two-stage development from a 'pre-religious phase', without deities but with a rich mythology, to a 'religious' one, in which the venerated ancestors become gods, even if many characteristics of the previous phase survive (Carandini [2002](#)). In the following years, the Marxist Antonio Gramsci compiled his notes in Fascist jails between 1929–1935, attempting a synthesis between the apparently incompatible points of view that ideology plays a crucial role in the creation of social structures (Gramsci 2007).

The same dialectic characterised the decades following WWII, from the theory espoused by Radcliffe-Brown ([1952](#)) that religion is a powerful tool of cohesion in primitive societies, to the structuralist idea that religion must be understood in a cognitive dimension (Bell [1997](#)), and from the idea put forward by the French anthropologist Maurice Godelier (1977) that religion is only a fanciful reflection of the real world in people's minds, to the 'vulgar' materialism of Marvin Harris ([1977](#)), who in his books emphasised the overwhelming role of the economy in the creation of

religious myths and taboos.

In recent years, anthropological discussions have focused on concepts such as 'performance' and 'agency' and envisage rituals as creative strategies by which people shape their cultural and social environment. A key contribution is the typology of rituals elaborated by Catherine Bell, who also classified the main characteristics of ritual actions (formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism, performance; Bell 1992; 1997).

In prehistoric archaeology, the traditional idea is well expressed by the famous 'Hawkes' hierarchy' of 'an ascending scale of difficulty in interpreting archaeological data in terms of human activities' (Trigger 1989: 392) – which has ideology at the top.

A different opinion is held by Colin Renfrew (1985; 1994), whose 'socio-archaeological' approach proposed that cult activities may be recognised in the archaeological record on the basis of the unambiguous presence of two types of evidence: the persons who perform religious rituals, and the deities in honour of whom these rituals are performed. Richard Bradley (2003; 2005) has challenged this point of view by countering that ritual as 'a social strategy of a distinctive kind' (2005: 33–34) is not separate from other spheres of human activity, as is evident, for example, at protohistoric sanctuaries such as Agy-Romance, the structural characteristics of which fit perfectly in those of domestic architecture. He contended that ritual must be considered 'one of the main processes that formed the archaeological record' (Bradley 2005: 209).

Many theoretical contributions emphasise the dichotomy between ritual (action) and belief (religion), emphasising either the first concept in 'behavioural' studies or the second one in cognitive studies. In his synthesis of the 'archaeology of religious ritual', Lars Fogelin (2007) has recently proposed a sort of 'exit strategy' from entrenched opposition towards the study of symbols and the development of ethnoarchaeological studies of ritual. In a recent seminar, Evangelos Kyriakidis (2007a; 2007b: 16) rightly stated that

‘ritual is a set of practice and that implies a relative constancy through time’ which is a characteristic that makes it recognisable in the archaeological record.

Renfrew (2007: 114) referred to the anthropologist Melford Spiro to define archaeology as ‘an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings’ and to draw attention to the ‘time dimensions’ of ritual (in the sense of the calendar, but also of the succeeding stages of human life). Renfrew also distinguishes religious ceremonies in state systems as characterised by a ‘civic’ dimension. In the conclusion to the seminar, Kyriakidis posed the crucial question of whether social structure conditions rituals or vice versa. The answer is halfway: ‘Ritual influences the beliefs of his participants, and precisely for this reason it is also a prime target for political manipulation’ (Kyriakidis 2007c: 301).

In Italian archaeology, there has been little attention for theoretical matters, and pre- and protohistoric cult activities have consequently not received much consideration. Until recently, a generally accepted view has consistently opposed the ‘primitive rituals’ of the prehistoric periods to the well-structured religion ‘imported’ from the Aegean (Blake 2005). Studies, research and discoveries of the last 20 years have changed this and allow us to reconstruct the essentially indigenous evolution of this peculiar sphere of pre- and protohistoric Italian communities, without ignoring the essential question of an enduring dialectic between the different parts of the Mediterranean (see, e.g., Bettelli 1997; 2002: 146–64).

New types of enquiry explored in the last decade include a modern critical evaluation of ancient findings, often superficially classified in the sphere of ritual activities (Bianchin Citton and Malnati 2001). In the field of late protohistory more specifically, they are the analysis of mythology as the main type of ‘historical’ speculation in Archaic society (Carandini 2002) and the iconological and/or structural analysis of decorated bronze objects (Pacciarelli 2002; Zaghetto 2002; Cupitò 2003).

It is my intention in this chapter to scrutinise key aspects of cult activities in protohistoric central and northern Italy. I will do so by building on earlier work of my own (Guidi 1989–90; 1991–92; 1998; 2004; 2006; 2007–2008; 2009; 2010) and by others (Bergonzi 1989–90; Whitehouse 1992; 1995; Peroni 1996; Maggi 1996; Cocchi Genick 1996, 1999; Pacciarelli 1997; Domanico 2002; Rizzetto 2004; Bernabò Brea and Cremaschi 2009). Particular attention is given to the so-called *Brandöpferplatzen*, which are a type of large votive pyres well known north and south of the Alps, as these have been well studied in northeast Italy in recent years (Culti Alpi 1999; Niederwanger and Tecchiati 2000; Di Pillo and Tecchiati 2002; Zemmer-Planck 2002).

I have tried to distinguish the main characteristics of cult activities during four succeeding phases of development:

- Early Bronze Age (2300/2200–1700 BC);
- Middle Bronze Age (1700–1350/1300 BC);
- Late Bronze Age (1350/1300–950 BC), which is usually divided into the Recent Bronze Age (1350/1300–1250/1200 BC) and the Final Bronze Age (1250/1200–950 BC);
- Early Iron Age: this period begins around 950 BC and ends by 730/720 BC in Tyrrhenian central Italy, in the early sixth century BC in the Sabine region of central Italy, in the course of the sixth century BC in Adriatic central and northern Italy, and by the end of the sixth century in the Raetic area (roughly corresponding with Trentino-Alto Adige and surrounding mountainous districts).

As in other European countries, the new dendrochronological ‘revolution’ has had an impact on the absolute chronology in Italy as well (Pacciarelli 2000). I use the ‘high’ chronology, even if it is still not accepted by all (Bartoloni and Delpino 2005).

The Early Bronze Age: A Period of Transition

Only a few of the hundreds of Val Camonica rock carvings are dated to the beginning of the Early Bronze Age. In one of them (Cemmo 6), 34 anthropomorphic figures in parallel rows are depicted, hand in hand; one has a fringed short skirt and a sort of sun-crown, a motif deriving from the sun disks often depicted on Copper Age rock carvings (Casini *et al.* 1995). Another tradition that goes back to the Neolithic are votive offerings around thermal springs, presumably because of their therapeutic virtues. The most famous instance of the latter is the 8 m deep pit with wooden walls of Panighina di Bertinoro in Romagna. It was dug on the shores of a little stream, and many vases dated between the end of Neolithic and the beginning of Early Bronze Age were deposited, if not thrown, into it, along with ochre and/or various types of seeds (mostly nuts and cereals) and portions of sheep and cows (Morico 1997). Another site of this type is the Lago delle Colonnelle, a sulphurous spring near Tivoli (Rome), around which numerous sherds of Early to Late Bronze Age date were found (Mari and Sperandio 2006).

Many caves were used for burial, as in the Copper Age, but various types of votive offerings have been encountered in some of them, usually those with a water stream (Tomba dei Polacchi, near Bergamo), a natural airhole (Grotta dello Sventatoio, Sant'Angelo Romano, Latium) or a deep sinkhole (Pozzi della Pian, Umbria). These practices were subject to impressive growth in the Middle Bronze Age.

Alongside examples of dripping, i.e. vases collecting water from a stalagmite, or crevices in which vases were thrown, we have cases of vases deposited in holes. In the Grotta Sant'Angelo (Abruzzo), for instance, there is a pit (40 × 30 cm in diameter) surrounded by 12 smaller holes (15 × 20 cm) filled with carbonised wheat, suggesting a propitiatory rite. An impressive case is also the Grotta del Colle (Rapino, Abruzzo), where ritual depositions began in the Copper Age and continued until the Roman period (D'Ercole 1997b; D'Ercole *et al.* 1997).

A totally new ritual practice is the votive deposition of bronzes in hoards. This has been recorded at Cazzago Brabbia in the north, where four bronze necklaces were

deposited in the water, and in Latium at Grotta Morritana, where six bronze axes and a vase have been found in rock gorges on the slopes of a mountain.

The Middle Bronze Age: Caves, Water Depositions and a New Cult Site

The ritual landscape of the Middle Bronze Age is unquestionably dominated by caves, especially in central Italy. The variability of the ways in which caves were used that have yielded burials or ritual evidence has led scholars to pursue two lines of explanation ([Figure 37.1](#)).

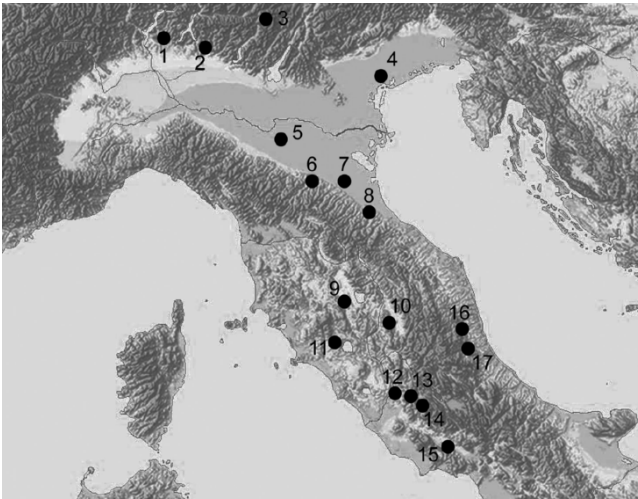


Figure 37.1. Distribution of Early Bronze Age and Middle Bronze Age sites mentioned in the text: 1. Cazzago Brabbia; 2. Imegna, Tomba dei Polacchi; 3. Valcamonica; 4. River Sile; 5. Noceto; 6. Casinalbo; 7. Redù; 8. Panighina di Bertinoro; 9. Cetona; 10. Titignano, Pozzi della Piana; 11. Ischia di Castro, Grotta Misa; 12. S. Angelo Romano, Grotta dello Sventatoio; 13. Lago delle Colonnelle; 14. Rocca Canterano, Grotta Morritana; 15. Cassino-L'Eremita; 16. Civitella del Tronto, Grotta di Sant'Angelo; 17. Rapino, Grotta del Colle (base map courtesy of the Ancient World Mapping Center).

Some have focused on a religious characterisation of cave

occupation (Cocchi Genick 1996; 1999; 2002: 117–55; Grifoni Cremonesi 1996), while other scholars, including myself, prefer to distinguish between caves primarily destined for burial and those used as real ‘cult places’. A factual distinction may indeed be made, as the first type of cave is usually not as deep and smaller than the second one, which tends to be deeper and meandering, often crossed by watercourses (Bernabei and Grifoni Cremonesi 1995–96). In the second type of cave, the original entrance also tends to have been preserved, while burial caves are more often than not obstructed by stone collapses.

A common feature of many burial caves is an area set aside from the burials for offerings, usually pottery vessels. An exception is the complex of Monte Cetona in Tuscany, where various caves were used for ‘secondary’ depositions, some reserved above all to men, some to women and some to elite members.

The types of offerings deposited in caves derive from agriculture and animal husbandry and include both sheep/goat and cattle bones and carbonised cereal and legume seeds. In some caves, the seeds have been found in ritual hearths. The most famous case is Grotta Misa in Etruria, where at least four different sectors of wheat, flour, millet and broad bean carbonised seeds could easily be recognised in a circular hearth. In one case (Grotta dello Sventatoio, Monte S. Angelo, Latium), fragments of a sort of cake have been found that was made from a mixture of cereals, milk, honey and oil (Costantini and Costantini Biasini 2007: 790). In the same cave, three fragments of burnt infant skulls have also been found (Cocchi Genick 2002: 149).

As the few climate studies of the Bronze Age demonstrate clearly that the first half of the second millennium BC was a phase of considerable aridity (Angle 1996; Cerreti 2003: 11–12), this might explain the propitiatory agricultural rituals performed in the caves.

Another class of finds related to cult activities are weapons such as swords, spearheads and axes that were deposited in rivers and lakes or in the mountains. Sometimes they were

left on the shores, but they were also deposited in the middle of rivers, as is demonstrated, for instance, by the hundreds of Middle and Late Bronze Age bronze weapons found by dredging in the River Sile, near Treviso). This practice is particularly well attested in north Italy and matches a tradition in central Europe.

Bianchin Citton and Malnati (2001) have proposed that in some cases, the composition of these finds can reveal the selective collection of objects originally associated in hoards (e.g. weapons found together with sickles). An alternative interpretation is that these depositions represent a kind of 'reparation' towards the deities of the elite who offered the weapons in public ceremonies to 'normalise' and readjust increased social inequality (Dal Ri and Tecchiati 2002). A comparable ritual has been attested in Cassino (southern Latium), where vases were deposited under an isolated peak called L'Eremita.

There are also many cases of domestic cults, as small vases and clay miniature models of carts, animals or (rarely) human figures are found in the terramare settlements. The two decorated gold disks from the terramare of Redù and Casinalbo seem comparable with the disk mounted on the well-known Trundholm cart model and must thus be linked to some form of ritual activity (Bettelli 1997).

A recent remarkable discovery sheds new light on the religious beliefs of the terramare inhabitants, as a huge wooden basin was found just outside the Noceto terramare (Figure 37.2). It measures 11 × 6 m and is 3.50 m deep, and was originally filled with water (Bernabò Brea and Cremaschi 2009). More than 150 whole and fragmented vases were found on the bottom, together with miniature vases, figurines, cart models and many wooden objects. Most remarkable are the remains of at least four ploughs, deposited approximately at the four corners of the basin (Figure 37.3). The structure had not been built as a cult place but had first been used as a water tank, perhaps by a local elite member to protect against emergencies such as famine or bad harvests. It is perhaps no coincidence

therefore that many of the objects subsequently deposited were associated with agriculture.

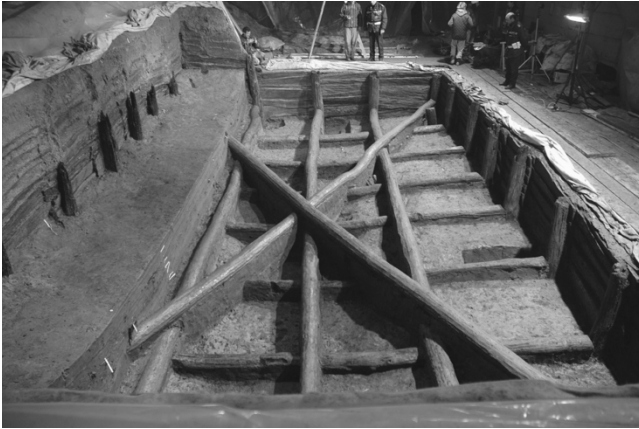


Figure 37.2. The Noceto wooden basin (photo Mauro Cremaschi).



Figure 37.3. One of the ploughs found inside the Noceto wooden basin (photo Mauro Cremaschi).

In general terms, the cult activities of the Early and Middle Bronze Age seem to recall the ‘pre-religious phase’ of Lévy-Bruhl, as the archaeological record has produced much evidence of rituals but none of a belief in superhuman beings.

The Late Bronze Age: Open-Air Cult

Places

The almost complete disappearance of ritual activities in caves, which became absolute in the Final Bronze Age, is the most important characteristic of this period, in which chiefdom-like societies became widespread across the Italian peninsula. In some cases, social inequality became particularly marked, and overall the settlement pattern became noticeably more hierarchical with fewer but larger settlements, which would result in the first cities of the early Iron Age. Some examples of caves that continue to be used in this period (Figure 37.4) include:

- The already-mentioned Tomba dei Polacchi near Bergamo, where pottery has been found in hearths, as well as ash lenses and little holes filled with ochre and a bronze razor incised with a double axe (Poggiani Keller 2001; 2002).
- The Grotta delle Mosche (*Fliegenhöhle*) near S. Canziano in the Triestine Karst, which is a 50 m deep cave with votive offerings with strong male associations (1500 burnt, fragmented and twisted fragments of swords, helmets, spearheads, pins, including the oldest iron objects found in Italy; Bergonzi 1989–90; Gustin 2007).
- The Antro della Noce in the Monte Cetona caves complex, which has yielded three swords of Recent Bronze Age date, embedded in a small crevice.
- Two caves in the Gola del Sentino (Marche). One is the Grotta del Mezzogiorno, where a hearth with little holes filled with burnt seeds of wheat or broad bean was interpreted as a propitiatory rite for the sowing season. The other one is the Grotta del Prete, where two complete Late Bronze Age vases were found deposited in a Palaeolithic occupation level (Lucentini 1997).
- Grotta del Colle, which has yielded some sherds of the Recent Bronze Age (D'Ercole *et al.* 1997).

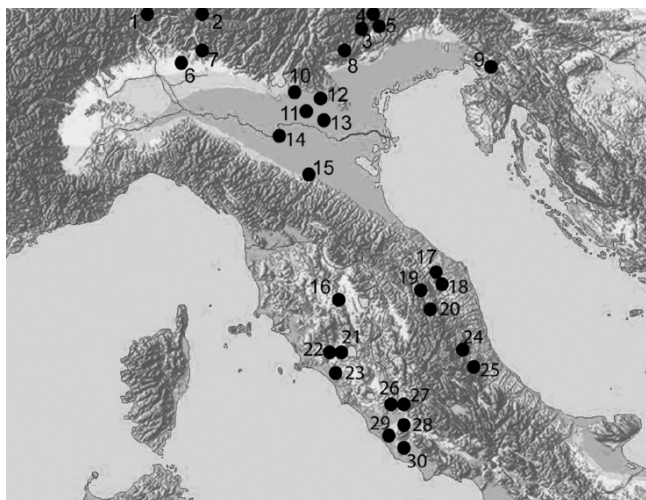


Figure 37.4. Distribution of Late Bronze Age sites mentioned in the text: 1. Formazza; 2. Passo dello Spluga; 3. San Maurizio Bagni di Zolfo; 4. Seeberg; 5. Mittelstillensee; 6. Malpensa; 7. Imegna, Tomba dei Polacchi; 8. Pergine Valsugana; 9. S. Canziano, Grotta delle Mosche; 10. Custoza; 11. Nogara, Pila del Brancon; 12. Desmontà; 13. Corte Lazise; 14. S. Rosa di Poviglio; 15. Borgo Panigale; 16. Cetona, Antro della Noce; 17. Monte Croce Guardia; 18. Gole del Sentino; 19. Gualdo Tadino; 20. Monte Primo; 21. Lago di Mezzano; 22. Sorgenti della Nova; 23. Banditella; 24. Rapino, Grotta Del Colle; 25. Risorgiva di Stiffe; 26. Roma; 27. Lago delle Colonnelle; 28. Pratica di Mare (Lavinium); 29. Nemi; 30. Campoverde, Laghetto del Monsignore (base map courtesy of the Ancient World Mapping Center).

The Late Bronze Age is characterised by a widespread appearance of cremation burials. The new ritual, which basically involves the destruction of the body, has a logical counterpart in the belief in some sort of survival of the deceased. An increased orientation towards the skies might well be related too. Another evident manifestation of this ideology is the miniaturisation of objects such as pottery, furniture, huts and bronze weapons, which is a particular feature of Final Bronze Age burials in the central Tyrrhenian area. As ‘chthonic’ or underground rituals were abandoned,

open-air cult activities became the norm around this time. More or less in line with a recent classification proposed by Rizzetto (2004), four main types of cults may be distinguished:

1. *Sun Cults*: The sun motif is present not only on golden discs that were probably mounted on wooden stands, as was the case in the previous period and is shown by specimens in the Gualdo Tadino hoard and from Borgo Panigale, near Bologna (Bettelli 2002), but also in numerous variations of the decorations derived from the sun chariot mythology, i.e. motifs such as the sun wheel, sun boat, sun cart, the sun carried by water birds and other ornitomorphic decorations that are found on pottery and bronze objects in burials and hoards (Damiani 2010; Peroni 1994; 1996).
2. *Ancestor Cults*: A most remarkable find came in 1984 from the Final Bronze Age cemetery of Desmontà, near Verona, where an otherwise empty grave yielded two bronze shin guards that are richly decorated with ornitomorphic motifs (Rizzetto 2004) (Figure 37.5). A handful of wood fragments suggest that the shin pads may have been worn by a wooden statue that presumably represented an eminent warrior. Similarly isolated sets of decorated shin guards are known from Pergine Valsugana near Trento and Malpensa near Milan.

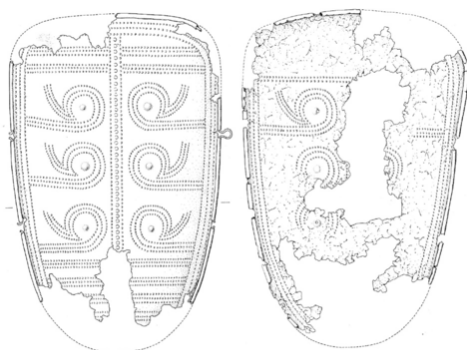


Figure 37.5. Final Bronze Age shin guards from the Desmontà graveyard (from Salzani 1993).

3. *Brandöpfplatzen*: These large votive pyres are widespread in the modern region of Trentino-Alto Adige and in the Tyrol. According to Paul Gleirscher (2002), they typically consist of an altar, often simply a large pile of stones, a votive deposition that usually includes cereals, fruits, meat cuts and fragmented jugs for ceremonial drinking, and a separate ceremonial area. Many are located in the mountains as if to be closer to the heavens. In Seeberg, north of Bozen (Bolzano), the pyre also include bronze slag from a nearby bronze workshop. This has been interpreted as a votive offering by miners as a sort of 'refund' for the intensive use made of wood and water (Niederwanger and Tecchiati 2000; Dal Ri and Tecchiati 2002; Niederwanger 2002).
- A similar pyre was found in the Po valley at Custoza, near Verona. It consists of a small oval mound overlying the destruction levels of a settlement. Inside the mound, many large and miniature vases have been found, many of them intentionally broken. Some could have been used for ceremonial drinking, while others may have contained meat, cereals, vegetables and fruits. The finds also included a twisted dagger handle and many loomweights (Rizzetto 2004).
4. *Mountain Cults*: There is ample evidence for ritual activities at high mountain sites, such as the bronze dagger embedded in a rock fissure at Formazza (Piedmonte) at a height of 2510 m, a richly decorated knife found at Passo di Spluga (1908 m), swords deposited on peaks of the Emilian Apennines, and the hoards and animal bones found at Monte Primo and Monte Croce Guardia in the Marche region (Lucentini 1997; Bettelli 1997; Domanico 2002). Recent excavations carried out at the Monte Cimino in southern Etruria have recovered a monumental structure dated to the end of the Bronze Age that enclosed an area of around 100 sq m with traces of ritual fires (Barbaro *et al.* 2012).

Votive Offerings in Water Courses, Lakes

and Springs

This is the most widespread type of ritual activity attested in the archaeological record of the Late Bronze Age, involving above all weapons such as swords, daggers, spearheads and axes (Bernabei and Grifoni Cremonesi 1995–96). A small number of knives and pins could be the remains of graves, while some other bronze objects such as sickles, especially when associated with weapons, could be the dispersed remains of hoards. Of an unmistakably ritual nature are remarkable finds such as swords firmly embedded in river bottoms, including 6.50 m deep in one case, in lake basins such as Mezzano in Etruria ([Figure 37.6](#)), and the 3000 bronze rings found near a sulphurous spring at San Maurizio Bagni di Zolfo, near Bozen (Bolzano).

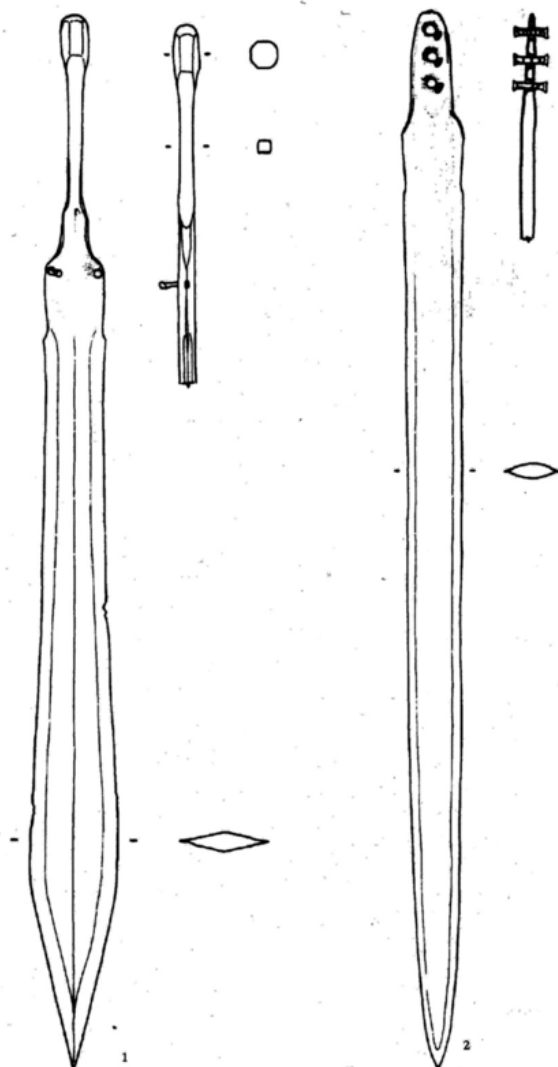


Figure 37.6. Final Bronze Age swords ritually deposited in the Mezzano lake (Valentano, VT; from Baffetti *et al.* 1993).

The ritual importance of water is also evident from the complex of walls and altars around the Mittelstillersee, a lake in the Renon area north of Bozen (Bolzano: D'Ercole [1997a](#); Bettelli [1997](#); Di Pillo and Tecchiati [2002](#); Domanico [2002](#)). A significant find is the hoard from Pila del Brancon

near Nogara (Verona), where a hoard of bent and broken metal objects was intentionally exposed to fire on the bank of a little stream. The hoard included swords, daggers, an axe, 51 spearheads and 73 bronze sheet fragments of protective gear such as cuirasses, helms and shin guards. This hoard has been interpreted as booty taken from defeated enemies that was dedicated to the gods (Rizzetto [2004](#)). A similar explanation has been suggested for other European hoards of the same period (Randsborg [1995](#)).

A peculiar type of evidence comes from two sites in the central Tyrrhenian area. One is the Banditella spring near Vulci, where an open-air cult site existed from at least the Recent Bronze Age. Bone items, glass beads and miniature vases were the first offerings of a large votive deposit that continued to be added to until well into the Archaic period ([Figure 37.7](#)). South of Rome, hundreds of miniature vases were deposited on the shores of the small lake del Monsignore near Satricum between the end of Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age.

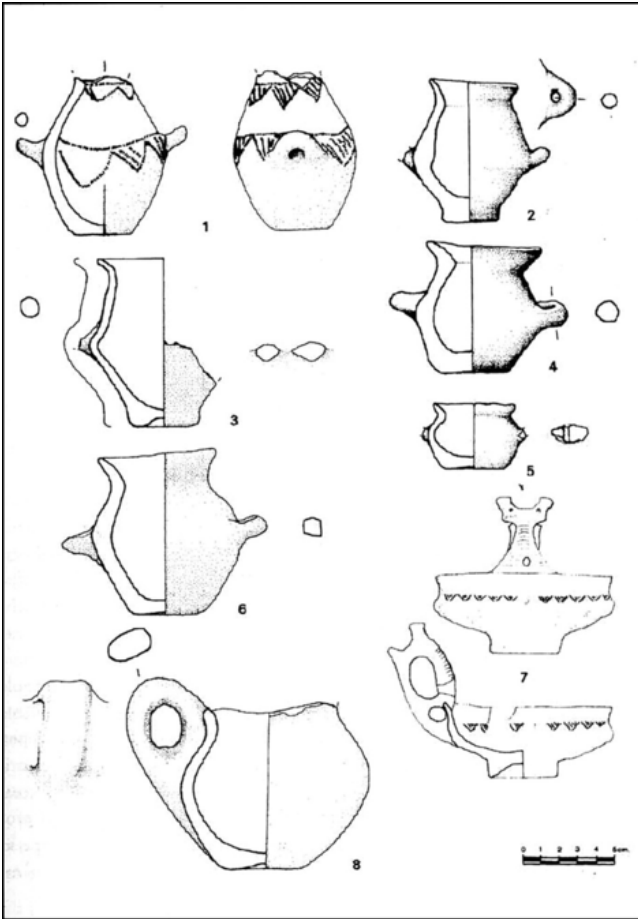


Figure 37.7. Final Bronze Age and early Iron Age miniature vases found in the Banditella votive deposition near Vulci (Montalto di Castro, VT; from D’Ercole and Trucco 1995).

Because both Vulci and Satricum were to develop into proto-urban centres, the ritual sites demonstrate how these sites were already perceived as focal places of the settlement system.

Domestic Cults

In Emilia and in Etruria, miniature figurines have been reported from domestic contexts, as at the S. Rosa di

Poviglio terramare, where 26 miniature horses were found (Bettelli 1997; Miari 2000). It is the extensively excavated Final Bronze Age settlement of Sorgenti della Nova, however, that has yielded the best evidence. At least two types of domestic cult have been attested:

- skull fragments intentionally turned upside down and deposited in a stone circle;
- hundreds of pig remains in an artificial cave of very young individuals, in many cases fetuses. A large number of pregnant sows and piglets had been slaughtered, which points to a ritual that Classical authors associated with the cult of Demeter (De Grossi Mazzorin and Minniti 2009: 44–45).

Further south in Latium, there are many archaeological finds that demonstrate a rapid development towards structured cult activities at the end of the Final Bronze Age. The most important one is surely the open-air cult site at Nemi, even if the prehistoric remains only consist of pottery and some wall fragments enclosed in a terrace of the later Diana sanctuary (Bruni 2009). Equally significant are the discoveries in Rome and surroundings at, for example, Pratica di Mare, ancient Lavinium, where male cremation burials with miniature weapons have been found (De Santis 2009; De Santis *et al.* 2010) (Figure 37.8). They include ritual double shields called *ancilia* that were later still used by the Roman priests of the Salii fraternity (Colonna 1991). These burials thus demonstrate how the end of the Bronze Age saw a small number of warriors combine the roles of military and religious chief among the communities of Latium.

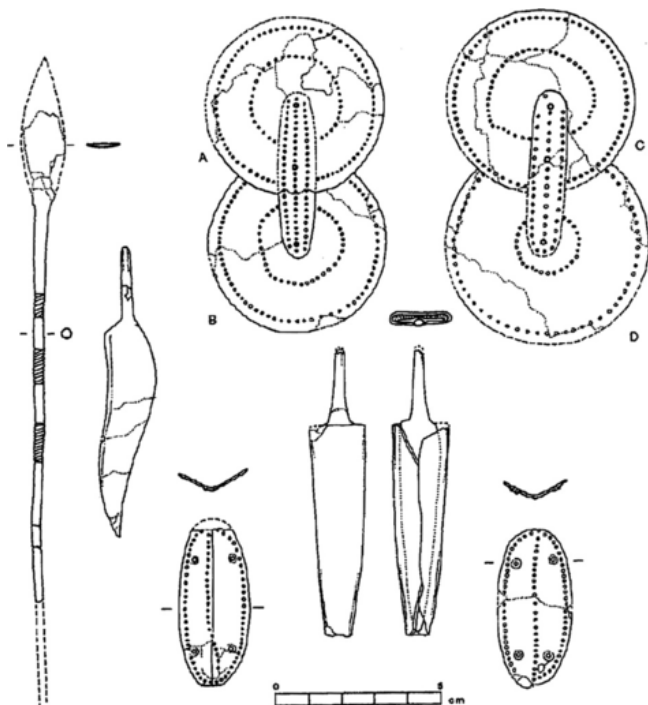


Figure 37.8. Pratica di Mare, Final Bronze Age grave 21 with miniature double shields (from Colonna 1991).

A final point concerns divine images in the archaeological record of this period. There is undoubtedly an increase in anthropomorphic figurines in many settlements, and it has been argued that many pottery handles may be seen as a schematic representation of people (Damiani 2006; 2010). The most intriguing evidence is offered by statuettes in warrior cremation burials in Latium by the end of the Final Bronze Age and the beginning of the early Iron Age. While they may be seen as an image of the deceased (De Santis 2009), it has also been suggested that they could represent the Archaic goddess Ops Consiva (Torelli 1997).

Overall, the evidence for this period clearly indicates the emergence of true religious beliefs and deities perceived as superhuman beings, which required the intercession of a small group of ritual specialists in order to honour the gods

and to seek contact with them. A further key feature of the period that continued to characterise the early Iron Age as well is the wide distribution of symbols associated with the sky (Fogelin 2007; Renfrew 2007).

The Early Iron Age: The Emergence of Civic Cults

The early Iron Age is characterised by the emergence of the first proto-urban centres, whose main characteristics are a radical change in size and a concomitant increase in functions fulfilled by these places (Guidi 2006; 2007–2008; 2010) (Figure 37.9).

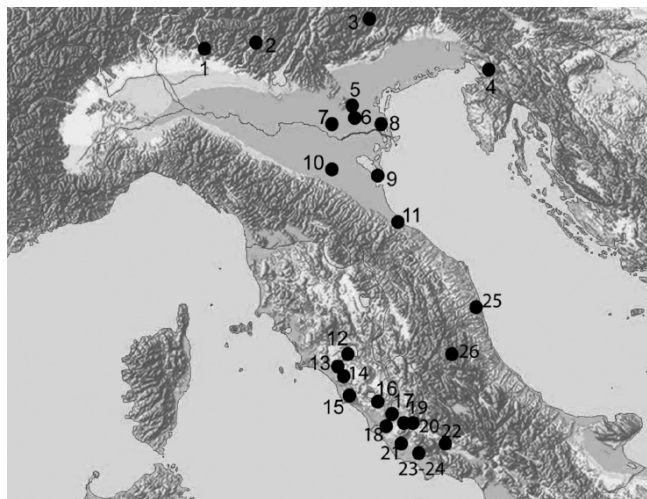


Figure 37.9. Distribution of early Iron Age sites mentioned in the text: 1. Imegna, Toba dei Polacchi; 2. Breno; 3. Lagole di Cadore; 4. S. Canziano, Grotta delle Mosche; 5. Montegrotto Terme, S. Pietro Montagnon; 6. Este; 7. Lovara di Villabartolomea; 8. Adria; 9. Spina; 10. Bologna; 11. Verucchio; 12. Bisenzio; 13. Banditella; 14. Tarquinia; 15. Cerveteri; 16. Veii; 17. Roma; 18. Pratica di Mare (Lavinium); 19. Lanuvio (Lanuvium); 20. Velletri (Velitrae); 21. Ardea; 22. Caracupa; 23. *Satricum*; 24. Campoverde, Laghetto del Monsignore; 25. Cupramarittima; 26. Rapino, Grotta Del Colle (base map courtesy of the Ancient World Mapping Center).

This development took place first in Etruria at the turn of the millennium, which coincided with the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age. Latium, south of the Tiber, northeast Italy, and other regions such as Campania, Bologna and Verucchio soon followed suit, probably as outposts of the Etruscan centres. Other cities emerged in central and northern Italy between the eighth and sixth centuries BC. Radical change also occurred in the social structure that heralded what we can label the incipient early state.

A second step is the definitive transformation of these centres into true cities, which archaeological evidence situates in the second half of the eighth century in the central Tyrrhenian area, in the early seventh century BC in Emilia-Romagna and around the turn of the seventh to sixth century BC in the rest of northern Italy, which signals the emergence of a mature early state.

If signs of growing complexity of ritual activities can be detected in the 'proto-urban' stage, it is only during this phase that we can recognise organised religion with priests and civic cult sanctuaries (Renfrew 2007). Even in areas where cities never emerged, the evidence shows that cult sites were normally related to settlements. A widely accepted view is that protohistoric cult sites in Etruria and in Latium had been open-air sanctuaries before the monumental stone temples of the seventh century BC were first built. Many votive deposits in Latium, including Rome, are, however, associated with temples and contained early Iron Age items such as miniature vases, while in many cases such as Satricum, Lanuvium and Velitrae (Velletri), protohistoric huts have been brought to light (Guidi 1980; Ghini and Infarinato 2009: 313–15). An excellent example is found at Satricum, where the protohistoric hut was clearly centrally situated under the temple and hut-shaped clay temple models have been found. A similar situation has been brought to light at Ardea, while in Rome the first hut-shaped temple of Vesta has been reconstructed on the forum with a date in the second half of the eighth century BC (Carandini 2007) (Figure 37.10).

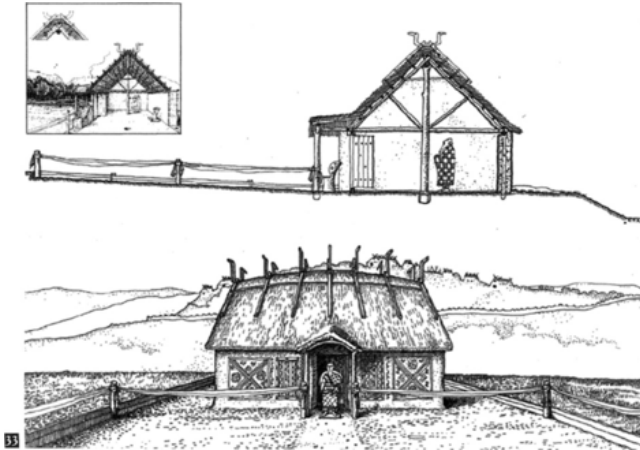


Figure 37.10. Reconstruction of the early Iron Age temple of Vesta, Rome (drawing Riccardo Merlo; from Carandini [2007](#)).

In Etruria, a similar situation has been demonstrated in Tarquinia, where the following building sequence has been reconstructed (Bonghi Jovino 2007–2008):

1. Open-air cult site dated between the end of the Final Bronze Age and the beginning of the early Iron Age;
2. Hut, very similar to the one in Satricum, dated to the eighth century BC;
3. Hut-shaped temple on stone foundations and a precinct associated with a votive deposition of power markers the bronze axe, shield and trumpet, all dated to the very beginning of seventh century BC.

At Cerveteri, recent fieldwork in a sacred area of the Archaic period has yielded several large huts that have been interpreted in ritual terms, while a large oval hut has been found under the Archaic sanctuary of Portonaccio in Veii (Ambrosini and Colonna [2010](#)).

In short, the second half of the eighth century BC saw the emergence of the first ‘civic’ sanctuaries in many Etruscan and Latial proto-urban centres. At the same time, a careful examination of grave goods and the fragmented written

evidence on Archaic Latin religion have identified interesting male and female burials that point to a progressive separation of leadership and ritual functions and the consequent emergence of specialised cult activities. Key find contexts include:

1. A male trench burial (without grave goods) recently discovered on the Veii acropolis of Piazza d'Armi: it had been preserved in a hut of the early Iron Age, which is interpreted as a very peculiar cult site, dedicated to a member of the local elite (Bartoloni 2007–2008);
2. Many 'ritual' vases show early Iron Age burials that suggest a specific role of the deceased (Babbi 2008);
3. Male cremation burials with *ancilia* (sacred shields) in Veii, one dated to the late ninth century BC (De Santis 2009; De Santis *et al.* 2010) and other of late eighth-century date (Figure 37.11);

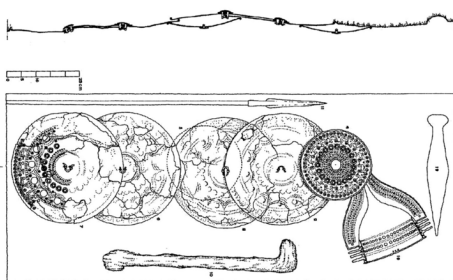


Figure 37.11. Early Iron Age grave of Veii, Casale del Fosso 1036, with normal size double shields (from Colonna 1991).

4. An early Iron Age female burial that had carefully been preserved in the construction of the Archaic sanctuary at Cerveteri (Izzet 2000);
5. A group of rich female burials of eighth century date in Latium that are curiously situated within settlement contexts, where normally only the children were buried (Guidi 2007–2008).

A first case in point is a remarkably grave of an 18-year-old woman in Ardea, which was found under the temple of

Colle della Noce in association with protohistoric huts, perhaps hut-temples. A second one is an equally rich grave of a young woman in Caracupa, which was found under the polygonal walls of the hilltop settlement near an Archaic votive deposit. Several of the ceramic vessels from the latter have been decorated with schematic men and women. Taking into account the literary tradition that only Vestal virgins or priestesses of Vesta were entitled to burial within the *pomerium* or settlement areas of Rome and Alba, I propose that these burials are those of Vestal virgins and thus represent the transition to the urban phase and presumably the emergence of state religion.

More important still is the opportunity to recognise both the survival of many Late Bronze Age symbols (Peroni 1994; 1996; Damiani 2006) and the presence of deities and mythological tales in pottery decoration and decorated bronze objects that are well known from Etruscan and Latin Archaic religion (Pacciarelli 2002; Delpino 2007; Brocato 2008). The famous cult wagon from a rich eighth-century female burial in Bisenzio shows, for instance, among its crowd of bronze figurines a divine couple who may perhaps be identified as Mars and Ops Consiva (Figure 37.12).

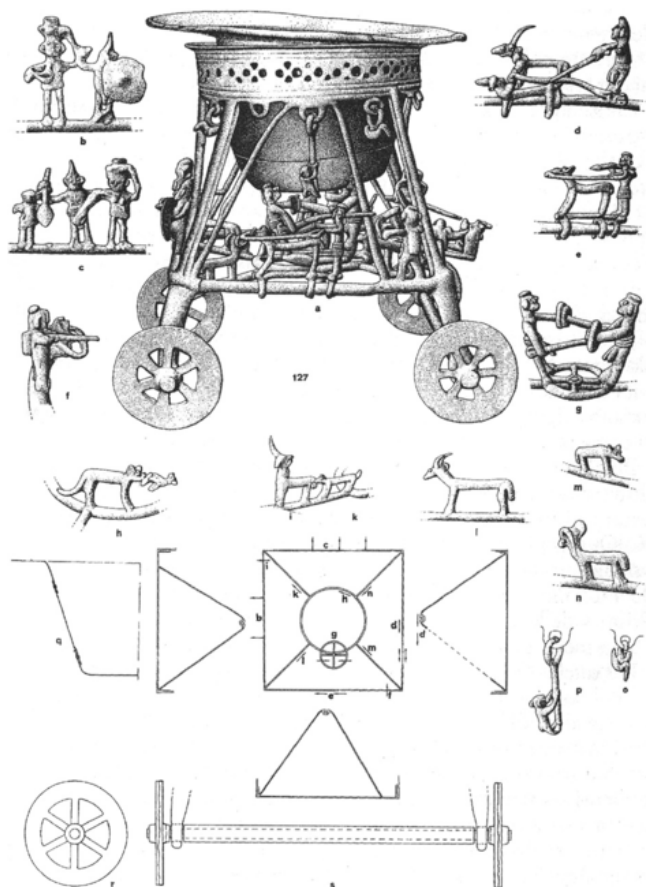


Figure 37.12. Early Iron Age cult wagon from Bisenzio Olmo Bello grave 2 (from Pacciarelli [2002](#)).

In central Adriatic Italy, the evidence for rituals in the early Iron Age is much poorer. In Abruzzi, Grotta del Colle saw votive offerings from the seventh century until the Roman period after an earlier period of abandonment. This cave and the first sanctuaries of the eighth century BC probably marked the boundaries between the different peoples known from ancient sources and epigraphic evidence (D'Ercole *et al.* [2003](#); D'Ercole and Martellone [2005](#)).

In the Picene region of the modern Marche region, at least one votive deposition with hundreds of miniature vases is on

record as dating to the end of the eighth century BC. It was located between the settlement and cemetery of Cupramarittima. These and other cemeteries of this period include pits with remains of sacrifices that offer other evidence of ritual activities. Another typical religious manifestation is the deposition of bronze statuettes that began in the early seventh century (Baldelli 1997; 1999; Naso 2000).

Apart from a 4 m deep pit that has yielded many beautiful bronzes of eighth-century date and later, and a ritual deposition of three shields from a central location in the Verucchio settlement (von Eles *et al.* 1997), the best evidence for a gradually increasing prominence of cult activities comes from northeastern Italy. It has been argued that a series of miniature vases and bronzes of early Iron Age date in this region testifies to a phase of cult activities preceding the first real votive depositions of San Pietro Montagnon, Este and Lagole (Capuis 2002). The presence of 'civic' sanctuaries situated around the largest settlements has now been demonstrated for Este between the end of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth century BC, which was also the final phase of urban evolution. These and other sanctuaries in the Veneto region are characterised by votive deposits of bronze figurines that represent warriors or deities (Pascucci 1992). It has been suggested that the Este sanctuaries and minor votive deposits of pottery and/or bronzes in Padova demarcate a border between the city and surrounding countryside (Gamba *et al.* 2008), while other sanctuaries, such as San Pietro Montagnon and Lagole, were strategically located in a 'buffer' zone on the borders of the Veneto territory (Capuis 2002).

Generally speaking, the early Iron Age in northern Italy saw continuity, even if on a smaller scale, of many Bronze Age ritual manifestations such as cave cults, with the votive offerings in the Grotta delle Mosche and the dripping in a vase at Tomba dei Polacchi, sun cults, *Brandöpferplatzen* and the votive offerings in water courses, basins and springs. Worth noting is the gradually stronger association between

cult sites and settlements in the Raetic area (Poggiani Keller 2001; 2002; Gleirscher 2002; Niederwanger 2002).

Of the deities of this period, Reitia is well known from the Este Venetic inscriptions, and it has been suggested that she was already worshipped in this period (Gleirscher 2002). At Breno, in Val Camonica, a Roman sanctuary dedicated to Minerva has also yielded evidence of an Iron Age late sixth-century open-air cult place with an altar and burnt votive offerings. The bronzes include a small pendant representing a praying woman 'emerging' from a sun boat with bird-shaped tips, who presumably represents a local deity, possibly Reitia (Rossi 2010) (Figure 37.13).



Figure 37.13. Early Iron Age bronze pendant from Breno, Val Camonica (from Rossi 2010).

A final discovery worth mentioning is the swan egg found in the seventh-century cremation burial of a baby girl in Villabartolomea (Verona). Similar eggs have also been found in eighth-century burials in Bologna and Este. The swan is a

powerful symbol as an aquatic bird that in ancient myths carried Apollo's sun chariot, as well as being a symbol of rebirth, possibly in connection with Orphic rituals that were brought to northeastern Italy by Greek traders in the ports of Adria and Spina (Malnati and Salzani 2004).

Alongside the eventual emergence of structured religious activities, a collection of myths may be traced from this period, which underlines that most material and immaterial traits of Italian Archaic societies have deep roots in the early Iron Age. It is therefore no coincidence that the best evidence of religious activity may be found in elite burials, where rich grave goods include decorated objects such as the splendid bronze buckets of the northeastern *Situlenkunst* and abundant evidence of ceremonial drinking that attests to a lifestyle in which feasting played a crucial role (Renfrew 2007).

Concluding Remarks

In the evolution of cult activities in protohistoric central and northern Italy, three successive phases may be distinguished. This first is dominated by the ritual use of caves, which goes back to the Early and the Middle Bronze Age; it was characterised by a kind of 'chthonic' religion with an emphasis on propitiatory rites. The second is defined by widespread votive offerings in water courses, lakes and springs, as well as dedications on mountains and to the sun, with an evident interest in the skies; there is correlation between incineration and symbols such as the sun disk, sun chariot and anthropomorphic motifs between the Middle and the Late Bronze Age. The third is characterised by the emergence of the first proto-urban centres and 'civic' cults, i.e. a structured set of rituals with sanctuaries, deities and mythology that was managed and organised by full-time specialists between the end of the Bronze Age and the early Iron Age.

A further demonstration of the existence of real 'sacred' places are the caves and the *Brandöfperplatzen* that were reused in the Archaic and Roman periods, in some cases

such as Grotta del Colle even until recent years. In conclusion, the evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates how, in each phase, rituals were not so much a pale reflection of socio-economic structure but, on the contrary, one of the driving forces of Italian protohistoric social evolution.

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38 Ritual and Ideology in Early Iron Age Crete: The Role of the Past and the East

Mieke Prent

Abstract

The study of ancient Crete was long dominated by a one-sided interest in the grand 'Minoan' civilisation of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. For many, the collapse of this civilisation in the course of the thirteenth century BC relegated the island forever to the periphery. When, in the 1970s, the early Iron Age was redefined as a decisive period in the formation of Classical Greek culture, Crete gained recognition chiefly as an exception. Although broad correspondences with regions elsewhere in the Aegean can be seen, for instance, in sociopolitical developments, the island's idiosyncrasies are equally apparent. Among these, two stand out: the supposed strength of 'Minoan' traditions, and the early receptivity to eastern Mediterranean cultures. This chapter focuses on changes in Cretan ritual practices from ca. 1000 to 700 BC. The intention is to show how new kinds of ritual – both by reviving and reinventing local traditions and by adopting foreign, particularly Near Eastern features – served as points of crystallisation in the process of defining social identities. This chapter thus combines the theme of ritual and ideology with that of social identity and, ultimately, by considering the nature of the island's early overseas connections, of insularity and connectivity.

Introduction: The Appreciation of Early Iron Age Crete

Studies with a specific focus on Crete in the periods after the demise of the Minoan palaces of the Middle and Late Bronze Age (LBA) are a relatively recent phenomenon. The late nineteenth-century discovery of a prehistoric civilisation in Crete – a memory of which seemed to be preserved in ancient literary sources about King Minos, mighty ruler of the seas – has been decisive in setting the research agenda for the island. More than a century of ‘Minoan’ scholarship has revealed a complex and, in many ways, unique society, albeit one with clear links to the great cultures of the Near East. In the LBA, the island exerted profound cultural, possibly even political, influence on various areas in the Aegean (e.g. Dickinson 1994: 234–50, 302–303; Macdonald *et al.* 2009).

Lack of scholarly interest in the centuries after 1200 BC – tellingly called the ‘Post-Minoan periods’ – was exacerbated by the early realisation that not only did the island never regain its pre-eminent position in the Aegean, it also lacked the more typical manifestations of Classical Greek culture. The island has yielded relatively little Archaic or Classical sculpture and not a single peripteral, stone-built temple. Cretan Geometric pottery, ill-fitting with sequences established elsewhere, never evolved into the much-admired black- and red-figure styles found in other parts of Greece. Instead, pottery production, like other artistic expressions, appeared to dwindle in the crucial period of the sixth century BC, leaving an enigmatic gap in Crete’s material record (for an insightful explanation of this sixth-century BC gap, first noted by Kirsten [1942: 4] and Demargne [1947: 348], see Whitley 2009).

To make matters worse, the preserved testimony of ancient Cretan authors was scarce, while that of others contained few concrete clues about the history of the island. Ancient historians have long noted that most available sources relate to Minos and his entourage, to stories of the birth of Zeus on the island and to mythological beings such as the *Kouretes*

(Poland 1932; Finley 1968: 7–10). Even formal treatises by Plato and Aristotle on Crete's Classical sociopolitical institutions refer to the island's past by associating them with 'the laws of Minos' (Plato, *Laws* 1.624; Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1271b; see also Van Effenterre 1948: 72–78; Huxley 1971: 506–507). There is no evidence that Cretan cities participated in any of the greater Greek military alliances of the Classical or later periods (Kirsten 1942: 6–7, 10–27). According to Herodotus (7.169–70), the Cretans declined to join the Greek troops against the Persians because, in past times, they had received no Greek support when they embarked on a (disastrous) expedition to avenge the death of Minos in Sicily. In brief, Crete in the historical period came to the fore chiefly as a repository of ancient cults and customs, but as a relative bystander with no contemporary history to speak of. Hence, as long as archaeology retained a textual and art-historical bias, the island remained of only marginal importance to students of the Classical Greek world.

More recently, there is less reason to begin an essay on early Iron Age (EIA) Crete with what has become an almost customary lament on this state of prolonged scholarly disinterest. The last three decades have seen a significant rise in fieldwork, symposia and specialist studies. This has come with the more general change, during the 1970s, in the appreciation of the period between ca. 1200–800 BC. In a series of now-classic publications, Snodgrass (1971), Desborough (1972) and Coldstream (1977) redefined what was considered as an uninteresting 'Dark Age' devoid of art and script as a formative era that held the key to understanding the origins of the Classical *poleis* and culture. For all the new paths opened by these studies, the importance of the EIA period was largely phrased in terms of its direct relationship with and contribution to Classical Greece. This left Crete, and its noted lack of rapport with the Classical world, in an ambiguous position. While modern scholars acknowledged the importance and dynamics of EIA regionalism (Morris 2000: 97–98), the history and culture of Crete were considered as too different for the island to be

incorporated in general studies of the EIA Aegean (e.g. Osborne 1996: 28; Morris 1998: 12; Lemos 2002: 2). Two major idiosyncrasies have been recognised in particular: the relatively strong continuity of 'Minoan' traditions, and the early and pronounced Orientalising qualities of the island's material culture (Prent 2005: 2–4, 11).

The idea that EIA Crete's history and culture developed along peculiar lines informs – perhaps even justifies – much current scholarship, including the present contribution. Clearly, the differences matter, but in order to bring them out in sharp relief, study of the island's connections and correspondences with other regions in the wider Mediterranean world is vital. Crete shared in many supra-regional changes, even if pace and degree may have varied. As elsewhere, the end of the LBA is marked by radical shifts in settlement location and configuration, in economy and exchange networks; on Crete, this is indicated by a widespread desertion of coastal areas and the foundation of new settlements at more defensible (though often highly visible) locations, usually in the mountainous hinterland (Haggis 1993; Nowicki 2000). Innovations of the period, pointing to overseas connections, include the adoption of iron technology, the use of cremation as a burial rite and the introduction of new types of weapons and personal ornaments such as the *fibula*. From the tenth century BC onward, and culminating in the eighth century BC, general developments entail population growth, a rise in material standards, increasing inter-regional contact, the reappearance of writing and specialist skills (especially in metalworking) and a progressive articulation of elite groups with aristocratic lifestyles (further details in Prent 2005: 109–26, 211–44). The specifics of these broad correspondences and the nature of the connections, however, remain understudied. Some of the most vexing questions (as underlined by Renfrew 1996: 11–12) concern the transformation of LBA Crete into a predominantly (Doric) Greek-speaking region in the historical period, organised in *poleis* with institutions that parallel those of other Greek *poleis*, most notably Sparta (Jeffery 1976: 190; Link 1994). By failing to address issues such as these, there

is a risk of overemphasising Crete's exceptionalism and insularity.

Taking as a point of departure the fact that EIA Crete, when compared with other Greek-speaking regions in the Aegean, shows broad correspondences in development as well as distinct idiosyncrasies, the next step – taken in this study – is to look at the interplay of parallels and divergences in the sphere of ritual and ideology from ca. 1000 to 700 BC. This was a period of dynamic articulation and restructuring of social identities and relationships, both within and beyond the island. First, however, further discussion of how scholars see Cretan idiosyncrasies is warranted.

Cretan Idiosyncrasies

In general, the immediate effects of the disruptions in the closing stages of the LBA, which ended the palace-based societies of that time, are considered to have been less severe in Crete, with a correspondingly greater survival of LBA material traits and customs (e.g. Snodgrass 1971: 84, 107; Desborough 1972: 118). Crete after 1200 BC is known for the continued existence of sizeable – albeit nearly always newly founded – nucleated settlements and for the uninterrupted use of Bronze Age (BA) cave sanctuaries and other extra-urban cult places. Well-known examples are the Idaean cave high up in the Psiloritis Mountains and the open-air sanctuary of Syme on the southern slopes of the Lasithi range (Figure 38.1), which were both frequented from Middle Minoan into Roman times. Other signs of 'continuity' have been seen in the relatively frequent preservation of indigenous, non-Greek toponyms (Knossos, Amnisos, Tylisos, etc.), divine names (Diktynna, Britomartis and Paiawon) and epithets (Diktaios and Velchanos for Zeus), while in areas such as that around Praisos in east Crete, pre-Greek languages may have survived into historical times. LBA survivals have also been recognised in many facets of the island's material culture during the EIA: in its pottery, in the continuously produced terracotta and bronze figurines and in house and tomb types (Prent 2005: 2–4 for

As stated poignantly by Sarah Morris (1992: 138), there have been distinct political and ideological reasons for stressing the idea that Crete's EIA and later culture was characterised by the survival of 'Minoan' elements and customs. The wish to see Minoan Crete as 'the starting point and the earliest stage in the highway of European civilisation' (Evans 1921: 124), thereby tying the island into the grand narrative of the Classical origins of western civilisation, led to an image of undifferentiated and static 'continuity' from the BA into the historical periods (Prent 2005: 53–84). This does not render observations about the strength of Minoan traditions invalid, but begs the question as to why, how and by whom exactly these traditions would have been kept alive (Prent 2005: 7–11).

been made locally, whether by itinerant craftsmen or in established workshops (Prent 2005: 233–35). Near Eastern influence can also be seen in some of Crete's EIA pottery, most notably in the 'Protogeometric-B' style of ca. 840–810 BC. This eclectic style, unique to the island, used curvilinear patterns inspired by metalwork, textiles and ivories of Near Eastern origin alongside older LBA and Protogeometric motifs, with contemporary Geometric motifs of mainland Greek and Cycladic origin (Coldstream 1968: 235–39). Further evidence of sustained interaction is also seen in the fact that Crete was one of the first Greek-speaking regions to adopt the Phoenician script (Burkert 1992: 27–29).



Figure 38.2. Orientalising metalwork from the Idaean cave: bronze decorated shield, after Kunze (1931: Beilage 1), and *tympanon*, after Kunze (1931: pl. 49) (prepared by Bert Brouwenstijn).

Several modern scholars, eager to counter Eurocentric views and related notions of the uniqueness of Classical Greece, have stressed Greek indebtedness to the cultures of the Near East (e.g. Bernal 1987; Morris 1992). Unfortunately, as with the issue of 'Minoan legacies' in Crete, 'Near Eastern' influence has often been approached in general and chronologically imprecise terms (as noted by De Polignac 1992: 114–17; Morris 2003: 42). Of course, the listing of similarities in the form of objects, decorative motifs and customs is only the first step in understanding the mechanisms, as well as the social and cultural meaning of transference. Instead of applying a model of passive reception, it should therefore be assumed that the appreciation and reception of Near Eastern influence – just

like the preservation of the local LBA heritage – was a selective and creative process. Results will have varied depending on the region, locality or social environment, as well as diachronically (Prent 2005: 11, 229). No less interesting, for Crete, the question may be asked how EIA receptiveness to the ‘Minoan’ legacy and the cultures of the Near East related to one another. These issues may be addressed by a closer look at what was happening in the context of religion and cult, some of the more ideologically laden spheres of society.

Ritual and Ideology in a Changing World: Ruins and Orientalia

Crete’s relatively rich and varied material record for the centuries after 1200 BC sets it apart from other regions in the Aegean and makes it possible to address questions of the kind posed above. As noted, the majority of twelfth–eleventh century BC settlements were newly founded, inland sites at prominent and defensible locations. Although they vary greatly in size, some may have housed 1000 inhabitants or more; Karphi, at a height of 1148 m in the northern Lasithi Mountains (Figure 38.3), is the best-known example (Pendlebury *et al.* 1937–38; Nowicki 2000: 238), but Kypia above Praios in the far east of the island deserves mention as well (Whitley *et al.* 1999: 238–42). To maintain cohesion, these populations will have required some form of sociopolitical organisation, however fluid (Whitley 1991), and a sense of community or shared identity.



Figure 38.3. View of Kaphi. Photograph by Mieke Prent.

In general, mountain communities such as these, coalescing at a time of widespread disruption and displacement in the eastern and central Mediterranean, may have been more prone to keep older traditions alive (Prent [2005](#): 121–24). This is expressed most visibly by the recurrent presence at these sites of so-called ‘bench sanctuaries’, whose central and free-standing position indicates a function of community sanctuary. They have close LBA and earlier architectural precursors in Crete and contain cult equipment that preserves LBA religious iconography. Most notable are the 0.55–0.85 m tall terracotta figures of ‘goddesses with upraised arms’, whose tiaras are adorned with birds, snakes, ‘horns of consecration’ and other well-known Minoan cult symbols; similarly, the accompanying ‘snake tubes’, stands for offering bowls, are a direct continuation of LBA types ([Figure 38.4](#)) (Gesell [1985](#): 41, 52–53, 178; Prent [2005](#): 174–91). This is not to characterise religion and cult in such communities as static. Intimations of new cult forms may be detected archaeologically in various domestic shrines, but these still seem to have operated in the shadow of the bench sanctuaries (Prent [2007](#)).

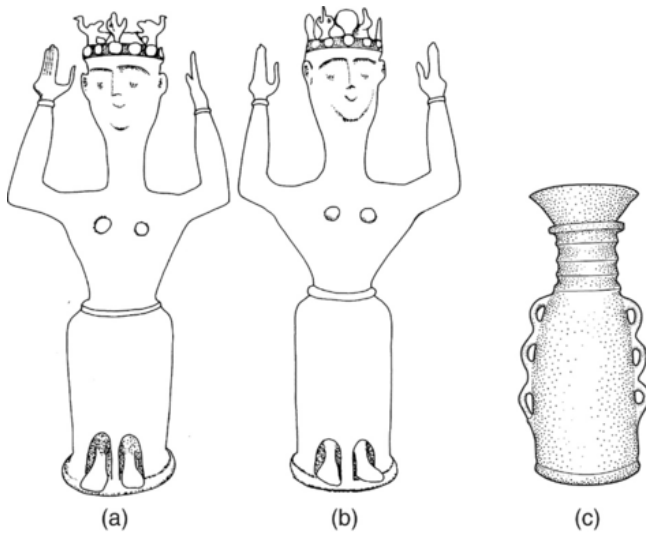


Figure 38.4. (a) and (b) Terracotta ‘goddesses with upraised arms’ from Karphi, drawn by Caroline Lamens, after Pendlebury *et al.* (1937–38: pl. 31); and (c) ‘snake-tube’ from Vronda, drawn by Bert Brouwenstijn, after Gesell (2004: fig. 7.8).

By contrast, there is no evidence for twelfth–eleventh century BC bench sanctuaries or for ‘goddesses with upraised arms’ from the areas of either Phaistos (D’Agata 2001: 347–48) or Knossos (Prent 2005: 197–98), situated in the more fertile and accessible hillside country of central Crete. Absence of evidence can hardly be considered as conclusive, but in the case of Knossos, the abandonment, around 1200 BC, of the ‘Shrine of the Double Axes’, a bench sanctuary on the premises of the palace, may strengthen the argument. This situation betrays differing attitudes towards LBA cult traditions in different regions of the island as part of a broader divergence in development. Significantly, Knossos and Phaistos, formerly the two most important Minoan palace centres, were also the only LBA sites that continued as major settlements until long after 1200 BC. Yet, this continuity in habitation can be deceptive when taken as an indication of stability. As best documented for Knossos, the period around 1200 BC witnessed distinct shifts in the use of

settlement areas, burial grounds and individual tombs. Together with the appearance of new traits in domestic architecture and pottery, such shifts may well signal the influx of people from the Greek mainland: Mycenaean – and subsequently, perhaps in the eleventh century BC, also Doric Greek speakers (Hood and Smyth 1981: 14; Coldstream 1984: 317; Prent 2005: 110–11). For the area of Phaistos and neighbouring Agia Triada, an incursion of Mycenaeans has also been proposed (D'Agata 1999: 235–37; 2001). In other words, divisions and cultural differences, possibly with ethnic connotations, may have existed not only between different regions of Crete, but also at the local level, resulting in varying appreciation and different uses of LBA traditions. At Knossos, local divisions may be reflected by the inception in the twelfth century BC of a modest cult in the 'Spring Chamber', in the south part of the former palace. The votives from here preserve elements of LBA religious iconography. Possibly, this cult served a small section of the Knossian population that resided in the hills to the south (Prent 2005: 198–99).

The ensuing tenth century BC constitutes something of a watershed. Several twelfth–eleventh century BC defensible settlements were abandoned, often in favour of more accessible sites closer to major routes of communication (Prent 2005: 224–25). At this time, the traditional bench sanctuaries and their related cult assemblages, including the large goddess figures, disappear from the material record and give way to new kinds of sanctuaries and cults. These spring up in and around settlements and, in their variety, give expression to newly emerging social and political concerns – some of them enhancing cohesion of the community as a whole, others playing a role in defining the various constituent social groups (Prent 2005: ch. 4). Mediterranean wide, the tenth and especially the ninth centuries BC have been seen as a period of intensifying overseas exchange. A particularly active role has been assigned to 'Phoenician' seafarers from the southern Levant, with Cyprus, but also Crete, providing stepping stones to the central and western Mediterranean (Sherratt and Sherratt 1993: 364–65; Knapp 2008: 3). On Crete, signs of overseas

contact with the eastern Mediterranean indeed increase in this period (see above). Tellingly, imports consist primarily of precious metalwork, ivories and unguent flasks, and are found in a select number of sanctuaries and tombs. This uneven distribution is consistent with exclusive appropriation (Hoffman 1997: 248) and the growing use of exotica in the forging of social identities.

During the same period of time, there was a change in local attitudes to vestiges of the BA past, as best exemplified by the inception of cult activities amid the ruins of monumental, BA structures, often those with palatial associations. The monumentality of these ruins must have provided a stark contrast to the modest, small-stone constructions of the EIA itself. To make them the focus or backdrop for cult activities suggests a deliberate choice, the more so since rituals predominantly took place in the open air. Seven examples of such cult places are known in Crete: Knossos, Amnisos, Tylisos, Phaistos, Agia Triada, Kommos and Palaikastro. Again, elite involvement may be suspected, as the votives nearly always include bronzes, while the presence of drinking equipment and animal bones point to the ceremonial consumption of wine and meat.

Interestingly enough, all but one of these ruin-based sanctuaries – Palaikastro in the far east of the island – are located in central Crete, precisely that region with the strongest indications for cultural discontinuity and the probable influx of Greek-speaking people in the period around 1200 BC. The present lack of evidence for any EIA or later sanctuaries at BA palatial sites in west Crete, another region with indications of a Mycenaean presence, may be simply due to the vagaries of archaeological investigation (on the steadily accumulating evidence for a BA palace at Chania, see Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2009).

Such transformations, enhanced by ethnic diversity, tend to make claims to authority and power more disputed and the need to seek legitimacy in precedent correspondingly more acute. Central Crete is also the region with the most evidence for overseas imports and receptivity to

Orientalising influence. The following discussion thus concentrates on central Crete, beginning with the better-documented sanctuaries in the territories of the former Minoan palaces of Knossos and Phaistos. Of the central Cretan sites, too little is known about Tylisos to be included here. This site, which displays certain parallels with Agia Triada, and for Palaikastro, is located in a region with a historical and cultural development very different from that of central Crete (Prent [2003](#)). As will become clear, some of these sites may have played a crucial role in establishing and structuring contact with people from overseas, and are thus of twofold importance for the questions raised here.

Cult Amidst Ruins

Sites with evidence for the execution of rituals at abandoned LBA monuments display marked variation in location and settlement history. The inland sites of Knossos and Phaistos had been the seats of the two most important Minoan palaces and are exceptional in that they continued to be inhabited after the end of the LBA. Agia Triada is also situated inland and may have had administrative functions, but was no longer settled after 1200 BC. Amnisos and Kommos had been thriving LBA harbour towns, but they shared in the widespread desertion of coastal areas around 1200 BC. As will become apparent below, the EIA sanctuaries that sprung up amidst LBA ruins also differ in their exact periods of use and in the votive types represented. Such variations illustrate the potentially diverse motivations behind the rituals, which seem to have blended religious or spiritual considerations with the economic, social, political and ideological. Even so, these sanctuaries may be considered as part of one and the same phenomenon – that of a renewed interest in a ‘heroic’ or celebrated past.

Obviously, such an interest in the past was not unique to Crete. On the Greek mainland, sanctuaries at former LBA palaces are also attested, as with those on the Acropolis in Athens, and at Mycenae and Tiryns. Even so, the phenomenon is exemplified mostly by the rise in popularity of the Homeric epics, the parallel creation of a ‘heroic’

figurative art and the evidence for worship at BA tombs, whether directed at ancestors, 'heroes' or other legendary beings from the past, such as the 'Silver Race' mentioned by Hesiod (Morris 1988; Antonaccio 1995). These phenomena are hardly or not at all attested on EIA Crete.

To begin with Knossos, it was in the southwest of the palace's Central Court, close to the original paving, that Evans found a deposit of Protogeometric to Hellenistic drinking cups, a Geometric krater, some terracotta figurines (one of them perhaps an attachment of a clay cauldron) and a silver Aeginetan coin (Coldstream 2000: 284–88). The drinking equipment and an (undated) concentration of ash and animal bone may indicate ceremonial dining (Prent 2003: 83). With evidence for EIA structures lacking, ritual activities seem to have taken place in the open air, at the heart of the ruined palace. That impressive parts of the palatial structures were then still visible is borne out by Evans's discovery of fragments of the well-known Minoan bull fresco in the Northern Entrance Passage, which had fallen at a level associated with Geometric sherds, one m above the LBA strata (Evans 1930: 171).

In the case of EIA Knossos, it is hard to imagine that a memory of the special character of the palace, echoed in literary sources about king Minos from Homer on, would not have been preserved. Some scholars, noting how the EIA settlement extended all the way to the limits of the palace but not over it, have proposed the conscious avoidance of the area for purposes of habitation (Evans 1928: 7; Coldstream 2000: 296–98). Evans interpreted this as a clear sign of the survival of the sacred character of the palace – as a 'Central Sanctuary of the Minoan Goddess' – through the ages. Unfortunately, there are no preserved epigraphic or literary sources of Cretan origin giving specifics about local memories and stories surrounding the palace at Knossos (or, for that matter, any of the other palaces).

Just as modern scholars disagree on the exact nature of the functions of these central complexes in the LBA, placing different emphases on economic, administrative, ceremonial, religious and residential activities, these ancient memories

and stories will, of course, have been selective and diverse. Nonetheless, two aspects seem particularly likely to have encouraged cult activities: the previous religious and cultic functions of the palaces, as stressed by Evans, and the connection with rulers of such legendary proportions as Minos, who may have been venerated as ancestral hero. According to Diogenes Laertius (I.112), a poem 4000 lines long, called *On Minos and Rhadamanthys*, had been composed by the Knossian diviner Epimenides, presumably around 600 BC. Parallels from the Greek mainland suggest that divine and ancestral worship may have been combined in the same cult place. For the acropolis at Athens, which probably housed both a LBA palace and the later sanctuary for Athena, Homer mentions the joint worship of the legendary king Erechtheus and the goddess in her temple, while she was said to have been a visitor to his palace in earlier times (*Iliad* 2.547; *Odyssey* 7.80). For Knossos, myths that make Zeus the father of Minos and the one who gave him the laws to rule his people are considerably less specific, but raise the possibility at least that worshippers at the former palace experienced – and claimed – connections with both the world of the greater gods and powerful rulers of the past.

While the votive deposit from the Central Court at Knossos is admittedly poor, further insights into the motives and social standing of the worshippers are provided by Coldstream's detailed analysis of the North Cemetery (Coldstream 1988; Coldstream and Catling 1996), which from 1100 BC formed the primary burial ground of Knossos. Coldstream has traced changes in mortuary practices that point to developing aristocratic concerns and affiliations. During the course of the tenth century BC, elite funerary customs became more uniform, with a growing preference for (the relatively new rite of) cremation in rock-cut chamber tombs. The appearance in these tombs of otherwise rare Attic drinking sets has been explained as the product of guest friendships and gift exchange with leading individuals elsewhere in the Aegean. With these sets, the custom of funerary meals or symposia may have been introduced to Crete (Coldstream and Catling 1996: 715–17). In this

context, it is important to stress the parallel with drinking equipment from the Central Court, as this suggests the involvement in ritual activities there of an emerging (probably male) elite (Prent 2005: 516–18).

Subsequent changes in mortuary practices in the North Cemetery took place in the second half of the ninth century BC, with the appearance of exceptionally large chamber tombs, which remained in use for several generations and which were among the richest in the cemetery. They are so similar in form to LBA chamber tombs that modern scholars have difficulty deciding if these are older tombs cleared out or extremely close imitations. Either way, as argued by Coldstream (1988), a conscious effort on the part of leading Knossian families to associate themselves with the local LBA past is implied. These families also adopted new types of urns that seem to reference the past. Their straight-sided form probably imitated that of LBA pyxides, while their decoration is in the new Protoegeometric-B style (Figure 38.5). As noted above, this style was partially inspired by LBA motifs, as is apparent, for example, in the reappearance of the bird-and-tree and female figures. In contrast, contemporary, more modest cremations were placed in coarse *pithoi* or belly-shaped urns decorated in the older Protoegeometric style (Coldstream 1988).

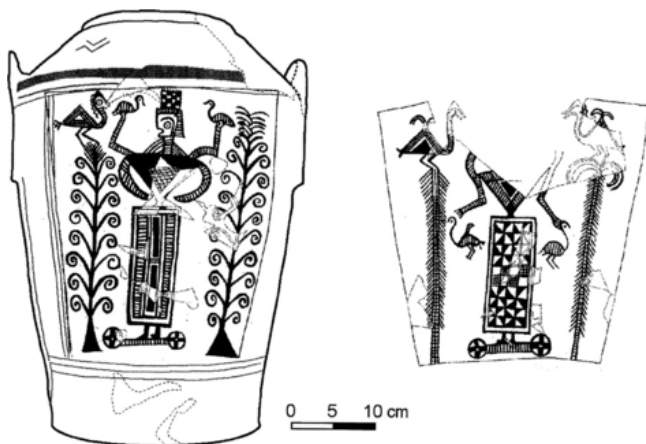


Figure 38.5. Protoegeometric-B urn from Knossos, after Prent (2005: pl. 79).

Coldstream's reconstruction of tenth- and ninth-century trends in burial customs at Knossos suggests the rise of an elite which, at least from the Protogeometric period, sought an active link with the past and, with this aim in mind, engaged in specific forms of reuse and imitation of LBA tombs and pottery. This roughly coincided with the inception of ritual activities at the former palace. The association with and appropriation of an illustrious and revered past, both at the main cemetery and at the Central Court of the LBA palace, will have served as useful tools for those aspiring to social distinction and a position of leadership.

Similar motivations may be suspected at Amnisos, situated on the coast northeast of Knossos. Both Linear B tablets from the LBA palace at Knossos and a passage in the *Odyssey* (19.188) that mentions the site as a windy harbour suggest that Amnisos belonged to the territory of Knossos (Hiller 1992: 46–49). Excavations at Amnisos have revealed part of a wealthy LBA settlement, abandoned shortly after 1200 BC, and of a sanctuary that was used from the ninth century BC onwards. An imposing BA ashlar wall, more than 44 m long and undoubtedly part of a building of palatial or public character, must have remained visible for centuries after its abandonment (Figure 38.6). A black and ashy layer 0.70 m thick, with votives from the ninth to the seventh centuries BC, had accumulated against it. The votives included fragments of precious bronze bowls and tripods and bronze figurines; the terracotta drinking cups, kraters, amphorae, storage vessels and animal bones probably constitute the remnants of ceremonial dining (Prent 2005: 332–36, for further refs). The location on the coast makes the EIA cult place here a good candidate for a border sanctuary as defined by De Polignac (1995). In this case, cult would have been instigated from Knossos, probably to justify claims to the surrounding arable land as well as to the harbour, with reference to ancient and divinely sanctified rights.



Figure 38.6. Reused Bronze Age ashlar wall in early Iron Age sanctuary at Amnisos. Photograph by Mieke Prent.

Such claims may be illustrated more clearly in south-central Crete, where three sanctuaries at LBA ruins were located in close proximity to one another: at Phaistos, Agia Triada and Kommos in the western part of the fertile Mesara plain. For most of the LBA, Agia Triada and Phaistos, only 3 km apart, are considered to have belonged to the same administrative unit, while a BA road, part of which has been traced at Kommos, probably connected the latter with Phaistos, some two hours distant (La Rosa 1985). The three sites probably continued to have a special relationship after 1200 BC, although the character of each then had clearly changed. An analysis of the later interrelationships and interconnections also sheds light on the reasons behind the installation of different cults during the EIA (D'Agata 1999: 236–39).

Phaistos, like Knossos, had been the seat of an important LBA palace and settlement that continued to be inhabited through the EIA and later. A ninth–seventh century BC votive deposit, found below the floor of a late seventh-century BC cult building (Pernier 1907: 262–64), attests to religious activities on a terrace below the southwest corner of the former palace. The early excavators of Phaistos, in contrast to Evans, saw no meaning for the LBA ruins other than as a source of ashlar blocks (Pernier and Banti 1951: 14). Nevertheless, it hardly seems accidental that the EIA cult place was located at the foot of two, approximately 4 m

high monumental walls that had sustained this part of the palace. These walls must have formed an impressive backdrop for the EIA cult, which until the late seventh century BC seems to have taken place in the open air. The character of the votives, consisting of precious bronze shields and bowls, leaves little doubt as to the wealth of the votaries.

The second site in the western Mesara, Agia Triada, constitutes a special case because it had already attracted cult activities during the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC. Unlike those at the other sites, these activities must have begun soon after the LBA inhabitants had left, probably to join the larger community at Phaistos (D'Agata 1999: 236–37). Cult activities in this period concentrated on the LBA paved court. Large terracotta bovine and other animal figures, as well as 'horns of consecration', dominated the votive deposit here. Banti (1941–43), who first published this votive deposit, proposed that cult was aimed at promoting the fertility of land and livestock. Part of the reasons for the use of Agia Triada as a sanctuary directly after its abandonment as a settlement thus may have been to lay territorial claims to the fertile valley to the north. Whether this was done with an oblique reference to the BA past, however, is uncertain. None of the abandoned ashlar buildings seem to have been actively reused or incorporated in these cult activities.

This situation changed with the Protogeometric-B period, when a new cult was established more than 150 years after the twelfth–eleventh-century BC one was discontinued. After detailed restudy of the old excavation material, D'Agata (1998; 1999: 241–48) observed significant differences between the two cults, which may well illustrate the crystallisation of aristocratic concerns during the intermediate period of abandonment. From around 840 BC to the early seventh century BC, the LBA ashlar Stoa, just north of the paved court, became one of two distinct foci for the dedication of votive offerings. While none were found inside this monumental building, many objects, as at Amnisos, had been deposited against its northern façade and

on the staircase to the east. A second concentration came from the court itself (D'Agata 1998: 19–24). Because many votives consist of bronze and terracotta animal figurines, something of the earlier agricultural interest may have remained.

A second concern, however, specific to this period, seems directed more at social definition and carries with it certain martial and aristocratic connotations. Votives from this period include numerous anthropomorphic figurines in terracotta and 12 in bronze; of the latter, six are of males, including a warrior. In addition, there are miniature terracotta shields and small bronze and clay wheels, which presumably belonged to model chariots. Both D'Agata (1998: 23–24) and Lebessi (1991: 108–10) see similarities between this votive deposit and those at sanctuaries where initiation rituals for young male citizens took place, such as Artemis Orthia at Sparta and Syme on Crete itself. Situating such rites near the visible remains of the past will have made initiants acutely aware of local traditions and histories, perhaps even instilling a feeling of being privileged heirs of the community's impressive heritage. As at Knossos, the Protogeometric-B period is one of the most tangible expression of links with the past.

The gap in cult activities at Agia Triada, curious at first glance, has been convincingly explained by D'Agata (1997: 99; 1999: 239–42) as representing a reorientation of the interests on the part of Phaistos, the largest EIA settlement in the region. Just when cult at Agia Triada was interrupted around 1000 BC, a new sanctuary was established at the deserted harbour town of Kommos. This was situated among the monumental ashlar ruins of LBA Complex P/T, for which the excavators have proposed a palatial or public function. The first, small cult building, Temple A, actually incorporated a section of the massive wall of Building T, while some of the ashlar walls of neighbouring Building P still stood ceiling-high (Shaw and Shaw 2000: 8–16). The presence of large terracotta bovine figures, of the kind previously dedicated at Agia Triada, may indicate that some of the earlier concerns with the fertility of land and livestock

were transferred to this site. The restitution of old harbour facilities, however, must have taken precedence, as the exemplary modern excavations have been able to establish here in much more detail than the incomplete, pre-WWII excavations at Amnisos. Fragments of Phoenician storage jars, faience figurines and vessels from the late tenth to the mid-eighth centuries BC provide evidence for overseas contact. Most significantly, the second cult building at the site, Temple B, erected around 800 BC, contained a so-called tri-pillar shrine of characteristic Phoenician form (Shaw 1989). This indicates significant foreign involvement soon after the institution of cult, and a realistic possibility of the exchange of religious practices, ideas and beliefs (Burkert 1992: 20–21). Cretan involvement is indicated by an uninterrupted series of locally made votives from ca. 1000–600 BC. These consist of objects whose precious nature and iconography once more point to the active involvement of an elite, such as miniature and life-size weaponry (including some bronze shields, one of them stuck behind the upright stones of the tri-pillar shrine around 760 BC), large terracotta horse figures and small ones in terracotta and bronze. The animal bones, seashells, drinking vessels and plates are indicative of repeated ceremonial dining (Shaw and Shaw 2000: 691). From the later eighth century BC, imports point to contacts with east Greece, the Aegean islands, various regions on the Greek mainland and Egypt (Shaw and Shaw 2000: 31–35).

While none of this negates the feelings of sincere piety cult participants may have felt towards the vestiges of what could have been perceived as the ancient abodes of long-venerated deities or heroic ancestors (or, as at Athens, of both), the ritual activities at these sites also suggest certain worldly, pragmatic considerations. While some sanctuaries may have come to be seen as territorial markers for the community, the early stages of these cults seem to betray, above all, the involvement and concern of elite groups that were in the process of developing discrete social identities and lifestyles, here claiming a special relationship with the world of gods and ancestors. The return to old and venerated harbour towns such as Kommos and Amnisos

added another element: that of privileged access to contact with people from overseas at a time when long-distance travelling would have been relatively risky, expensive and far from common. Religious festivals generally offer opportunities for exchange and trade, but as De Polignac (1992: 122–25) noted, if contact is structured around such occasions, it may be restricted to specific places and people. Whether intended or not, the existence of ‘international sanctuaries’ such as Kommos may then exert a regulating effect on still intermittent contact with people from far distant places. As a result, foreign contacts, the possession of foreign artefacts and familiarity with foreign ritual practices and beliefs could be co-opted by and become the prerogative of elite groups.

Elites, Exotica and the Past

Kommos offers an example of how sanctuaries may become places of mediation, not only with the supernatural but with travellers and traders from faraway, foreign worlds. Such an interpretation reflects the recent adoption by archaeologists of the anthropological models of Appadurai (1986) and Helms (1988; 1992). These models consider the acquisition of foreign, exotic objects and knowledge as an active ingredient in the practice of social differentiation. Travelling to geographically distant regions extends the intellectual and experiential horizons of those involved, imbuing them with esoteric knowledge and, potentially, transforming them into ‘exceptional persons’ or ‘men of influence’ (Helms 1992: 159–61).

At the same time, the example of Kommos, which points to recurrent visits to the island by Phoenician seafarers from at least the late tenth century BC, signals an initial, subtle shift in mode of contact and therefore perhaps also in the meaning ascribed to *Orientalia* by local Cretan communities. To explore this, a comparison of the kinds of overseas contact in the two centuries before and the two after the tenth century BC is attempted.

As mentioned above, even after the demise of the LBA palaces around 1200 BC, Crete had never been entirely cut

off from long-distance contacts, most notably those with Cyprus. Similarities have been noted, for instance, in the twelfth-century BC pottery from the two islands (Desborough 1972: 49–63). Evidence for imports at sanctuaries and settlements on Crete is still relatively rare. One exception is the bronze Reshep figurine, probably from the cave sanctuary at Patsos, in west-central Crete, dated to the eleventh century BC on stylistic grounds (Hoffman 1997: 24–25). The settlement of Karphi has yielded a Cypriot-type bronze pendant and a bronze *fibula* and knives from Italy or Sicily. The fact that copper must have been imported indicates equally distant connections, with Cyprus or Sardinia (Hoffman 1997: 118; Crielaard 1998: 197).

More detailed information can be gleaned from funerary contexts of this period. On Crete, seven exceptionally rich tombs from the twelfth–eleventh centuries BC are known: one at Pantanassa, close to Patsos in west-central Crete, two in the North Cemetery at Knossos and, farther east, two from Moulia and one each from Milatos and Praesos (Kanta 2003: 180–82). The prevalence in these tombs of the newly introduced – and still exclusive – rite of cremation and the associated grave goods show distinct similarities with rich tombs elsewhere in the Aegean, notably with Tomb XXVIII at Tiryns and the Toumba building at Lefkandi, and with a large group of tombs on Cyprus (at Salamis, Lapithos *Kastros*, Kourion *Kaloriziki*, Palaepaphos *Skales* and Amathus) (Catling 1995: 125–26). Common grave goods include bronze swords, whetstones, shields, unusual iron knives and dagger/dirks, gold and sometimes ivory, (bronze) dining equipment in the form of amphoroid kraters, bowls, tripod-stands and *obeloi* (‘spits’), and occasionally ‘antiques’ such as a Babylonian gold pendant at Lefkandi and a boars tusks’ helmet at Knossos.

Crielaard (1998) explains the wide distribution of these exceptional tombs as a result of the personal dealings of a select few with like-minded people overseas. With Cypriotes in a leading role, an ‘international’ lifestyle was fashioned which shows a strong focus on martiality and feasting. According to Crielaard, long-distance contact in this period

took the form of ‘interlocking aristocratic networks’, based on personal relationships in the more immediate regions and indirect connections beyond that. The result was a chain of networks, reaching from the Near East to Sardinia and beyond, and constituting spheres of interaction rather than fixed trade routes (Crielaard 1998: 194). These ideas prefigured more recent models which, following Horden and Purcell (2000), emphasise the connectedness of the Mediterranean through dynamic and non-hierarchical forms of mobility and exchange (Morris 2003: 40).

As to twelfth–eleventh-century Cretan exploits overseas, an image of individual or loosely organised seafarers, men-at-arms and adventurers seems best to fit the bill. Perhaps more so than on Cyprus, where elites may have dominated their own local exchange networks and engaged in intense elite competition (Crielaard 1998: 188, 191, 194; but cf. Knapp 2008: 292–97, 345–46), sociopolitical organisation on Crete probably was fluid and variable (Whitley 1991; Prent 2005: 119). Evidence for established or hereditary leadership in this period is slender: rather than indicating use as family tombs, Catling (1995: 125–26) has explained some inhumations accompanying the cremations in rich Cretan tombs as evidence for human sacrifice. Only the two eleventh-century BC burials at Knossos constitute so-called ‘master’ or first graves in their cemetery (Catling 1995: 125), suggesting that their occupants came to be seen as founding members of the community. Apparently, their overseas ventures had not only been successful in terms of acquiring wealth, but their foreign experiences had been translated into social status, thus making them into true ‘men of influence’.

Throughout the tenth century BC and later, these ‘interlocking elite networks’ continued to underpin aristocratic aspirations and lifestyles (Crielaard 1998: 199) and also seem to have kept their appeal for Cretans. The numerous Attic drinking vessels in the richer Protogeometric tombs at Knossos are of shapes that were hardly exported elsewhere and are therefore interpreted as the products of gift exchange with leading Attic families (Coldstream and

Catling 1996: 715–17). From the following periods, into the late eighth and early seventh centuries BC, there are rich cremation burials at Knossos, Prinias and Eleutherna. Like a series of contemporary rich tombs elsewhere in the Mediterranean, these were provided with chariots, horses, weaponry, precious bronzes, jewellery and furniture, elaborate drinking equipment and *obeloi*, reflecting ‘heroic’ burial customs (including human sacrifice) of the kind described in the Homeric epics (Crielaard 1998: 199; Karageorghis 2003).

At the same time, the intensification in Mediterranean exchange noted for the tenth and especially ninth centuries BC brought with it different modes of contact. The development of more fixed routes, leading from Cyprus to the Anatolian coast and the Aegean, and from Cyprus via Crete to the western Mediterranean, is significant, as it promoted more regular and direct transactions (Sherratt and Sherratt 1993: 364; Crielaard 1998: 199). The scarcity of Cretan pottery abroad and the island’s virtual absence in the ensuing colonising ‘movement’ has led to the suggestion that Cretans made little active use of these fixed routes (Coldstream 1977: 288–90). From the later tenth century BC, however, Crete began to serve as a staging post, with Kommos as a concrete example. This may have brought foreign visitors considerably closer to home and contributed to increasing the number and variety of foreign imports on Crete.

The later tenth and especially ninth centuries BC also show another significant development with which foreigners may have been connected: that of the increased local production of ‘Orientalia’ (Prent 2005: 233). Although the archaeological evidence for immigrant craftsmen on Crete has recently come under scrutiny (Hoffman 1997: 153–245), Crete possesses relatively convincing evidence for the permanent settlement of craftsmen from the Near East. This was first suspected because of the coherent class of Cretan bronze shields, produced from the later ninth into the seventh century BC. These are executed in a marked Assyrianising style, but with enough Cretan iconographic

peculiarities to suggest that local workshops were established under the guidance of Oriental masters (Prent 2005: 233, 372 with further refs). It is of interest that funerary evidence linked to Near Eastern immigrants implies their relatively high status. Boardman (1980: 56–57) has interpreted a hoard of Orientalising jewellery and unworked gold, buried in two Protogeometric-B pots near the threshold of Teke Tomb 2 at Knossos, as belonging to a Near Eastern goldsmith (see Kotsonas 2006, however, for a more sophisticated interpretation). At Eleutherna, three Phoenician-type *cippi* (grave markers) probably belonged to a late eighth-century BC burial enclosure within the wealthy cemetery at Orthi Petra (Stampolides 2003: 221–24). Lastly, there is a group of eighth–seventh-century BC cremation burials in Aphrates that have their closest parallels at Karkemish in Syria (Boardman 1980: 60).

In addition to the Cretan shields, there is an impressive array of other Oriental and Orientalising objects from the island. These include bronze rod-tripods and four-sided stands, lotiform (lotus bud- or flower-shaped) jugs, lotus-handle and relief bowls (technically and stylistically related to the Cretan shields), gold jewellery and ivory. In nearly all cases, there is ongoing debate about the question of which objects were imported (and if so, from where and when), and which were locally made (and if so, whether this was done by immigrants or local craftsmen). Well-known examples are the rod-tripods and four-sided stands: the LBA Cypriot origin of these types is undisputed, but their presence in Cretan contexts from the tenth century BC on has been explained, on the one hand, by Catling (1984) as proof of the lasting circulation of much-valued antiques, and on the other, by Matthäus (1988), as indicating independent Cretan workshops (Hoffman 1997: 116–20; Prent 2005: 377–78, with full refs). For the lotus-handle bowls (tenth–seventh centuries BC) and relief bowls (ca. 750–675 BC), there is agreement that several were imported, but scholars are divided on their exact number in relation to Cretan-made examples (Hoffman 1997: 125–35). The same applies to the many ivory objects (Hoffman 1997: 156–60). According to Hoffman (1997: 38), faience beads, which are

relatively frequent in Cretan contexts from 1100–700 BC, could equally well be Minoan survivals, local EIA products or Near Eastern imports. Moreover, modern scholars have found it nearly impossible to decide whether representations in Crete of, for example, the Potnia Theron (Mistress of Animals), which occur both in the BA and the EIA, represent an instance of continuity or re-importation from the Near East (Burkert 1992: 19 n. 22; Boardman 1980: 78).

While modern scholars increasingly opt for significant local production (e.g. Markoe 2003), it is most interesting in this context that the differences between Near Eastern originals, whether dating from the LBA or EIA, and Cretan EIA imitations are so hard to discern. The question then arises if making this distinction would have been any easier for EIA Cretans and, indeed, whether it mattered to them at all. One reason why modern attempts to determine the origins, period and manner of transmission are complicated is because contact and influence between the Aegean and Near East had already been intensive during the Middle and LBA (e.g. Demargne 1947: 294; Morris 1997: 56–58). This, of course, raises another question: if we are to consider the Mediterranean as ‘an entangled web of people, things, skills and ideas’, or ‘Orientalising’ as a inseparable dimension of Aegean culture (Riva and Vella 2006: 2, 11), to what extent were Oriental or Orientalising objects then seen as truly foreign? A few modern scholars opt for the wholesale abandonment of the concept of ‘Orientalisation’, as ‘the Orient’ would be no more than the figment of modern Western imagination (e.g. Purcell 2006). This approach has been rightly criticised (e.g. Osborne 2006: 155), and alternative proposals to distinguish between ‘a conscious desire for and emulation of things East’ and a “‘detached” form of Orientalising without intention’ seem more fruitful (Riva and Vella 2006: 11–12).

Conclusions

Perhaps it is time to return to Helms (1992: 158–59), who followed her statement that ‘ethnographic and ethnohistoric data from all types of cultures clearly indicate that

geographical distance carries cosmological connotations that correlate geographical distance with supernatural distance' with the observation that distance may also carry a *temporal* dimension '...such that distant lands may be associated with ancestral or cosmic origins'. This preserves the notion that access to foreign, exotic goods and knowledge bore with it prestige, and leaves open the possibility of a 'detached form of Orientalising' – in the case of EIA Crete, one in which more general associations with the supernatural and/or ancestral origins were (or gradually became) more important.

The grave gifts of the twelfth–eleventh century BC elite tombs already tell a mixed story: while there is a strong Cypriot and therefore perhaps 'consciously Orientalising' component, there are also objects of central Mediterranean origin and an important presence of antiques – some of them with eastern pedigrees, but others, such as the boars tusks' helmet and gold death masks, not. While this is not to deny that Oriental associations played a role, the symbolic connotations of these assemblages with a heroic past may have been equally strong.

For (late) tenth–eighth century BC Crete, three observations are relevant to the interpretation of the uses and meaning of 'Orientalia'. These observations in fact lessen the possibility that such objects primarily refer to the East as a (contemporary) foreign country: the island's growing function as staging post, which brought Cretans in more regular and direct contact with foreigners than during the previous two centuries; the production of 'Orientalia' by locally based craftsmen (of whatever stock); and the distinct possibility that differences between Oriental imports and local imitations, and between LBA and contemporary 'Orientalising' motifs, were largely imperceptible.

This does not mean that 'Orientalising' objects lost either their exclusive or their exotic character. Until the seventh century BC, there is no sign of the application of Orientalising styles to less precious objects, such as bronze pins (Prent 2005: 397). The Cretan shields, moreover, retained their distinct Assyrianising style for a period of 150

years or more (Coldstream 1977: 287–88), suggesting a definite intention to the style. These shields, of which the vast majority was found in the age-old cave sanctuary at Ida, may have been made specifically as votives, and their iconography may provide insights into the symbolism of Oriental idioms. Several shields have extended figurative scenes that show heavily armed warriors, some of which have been interpreted as *Kouretes*, the mythical Cretan warriors that protected the infant Zeus. Others, less specific, include heavily armed men hunting lions; here the frequent inclusion of sphinxes, exotic plants and an occasional Potnia Theron also seems to imply a supernatural setting, very different from the ‘heroic scenes’ in mainland Greek art (Prent 2005: 371–72).

For EIA Cretans, stories of the birth of Zeus, the supreme god and the father of king Minos, will have been part of their history. It is here that Cretan elite use of ‘Orientalia’ and interest in the past, as also expressed by worshipping at ancient sanctuaries and at the ruined abodes of old and venerated kings, may come together. It is tempting to suggest that, for EIA Cretans, ‘Orientalising’ objects and styles referred to an illustrious and exotic past, when gods still conversed with kings. But if the past was an exotic realm, it was still one that provided upcoming ‘men of influence’ and aristocrats with a powerful instrument of social distinction. This gave them all the more reason to restrict contact with foreigners to specific sanctuaries and to incorporate immigrant metalworkers as part of the elite.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the editors of this volume for the opportunity to contribute and for their patience and stamina. Thanks are due to Stuart MacVeagh Thorne for reading the text and checking the English. I am also grateful to Jaap Fokkema for producing the map of Crete and to Bert Brouwenstijn for preparing the other illustrations.

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